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**Networking the March
the literature of the Welsh Marches, c. 1180–c. 1410**

Lampitt, Matthew Siôn

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Networking the March:
The Literature of the Welsh Marches,
c. 1180—*c.* 1410

Matthew Siôn Lampitt

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Abstract

This thesis is an examination of the cultural and political climate of the medieval Welsh Marches. The investigation is structured around three case studies: Hereford, *c.* 1180–*c.* 1210; Ludlow, *c.* 1310–*c.* 1350; Cwm Tawe, *c.* 1380–*c.* 1410. Using these three case studies, the thesis develops a critique of the core-periphery model that has dominated modern conceptualisations of medieval political and cultural geographies. In its place, I formulate an alternative model based on an engagement with social theories of the network, including Manuel Castells’s ‘network society’ and, in particular, Bruno Latour’s work on ‘actor-network theory’. Reading with networks might, I contend, provide a new, more ethical interpretative model, one capable of restoring cultural and political agency to erstwhile ‘peripheral’ regions. The first chapter traces the multifarious textual networks in which the three case-study locales were active: it thereby identifies the corpus of the following three chapters (i.e. the texts circulated, composed, copied, or translated in each locale), and situates them in their manuscript contexts. The second chapter develops ‘networked’ readings of the texts themselves: I analyse the ways in which the texts position their local environments in relation to the global networks described in their narratives, such that they not only disprove the ‘peripheral’ status ascribed to the Marches, but more searchingly question the validity of the model that produces such ascriptions. Chapters 3 and 4 take a thematic approach, using networks to analyse the political modalities of the texts’ representations of nonhuman agency (Chapter 3) and of issues surrounding language, translation, and multilingualism (Chapter 4). Chapter 5 opens up the corpus to investigate representations of the Welsh Marches in Arthurian literature: I suggest that not only do the Marches emerge as highly connected regions, but that Arthurian literature more fundamentally imagines a networked model of political and cultural geography. The thesis concludes by turning to the Hereford *mappa mundi* as a succinct image of the investment of the so-called ‘periphery’ in a truly global worldview, and by reasserting the importance of reading with networks in the current political climate.

*This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my
Granny Lampitt, my first, best, and most
dearly missed friend.*

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| AIME | <i>An Inquiry into Modes of Existence</i> . 2013–present. ERC–Institut d'études politiques de Paris. http://modesofexistence.org |
| AN | Anglo-Norman |
| AND | <i>The Anglo-Norman Dictionary, Version 2</i> . 2000–2006. AHRC–University of Aberystwyth, University of Swansea. http://www.anglo-norman.net |
| ASC | <i>The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition</i> . Gen. eds David N. Dumville and Simon Keynes. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1983–. |
| BHO | <i>British History Online</i> . 2003. IHR–SOAS. https://www.british-history.ac.uk |
| BL | British Library |
| BLDM | <i>British Library Digitised Manuscripts</i> . British Library. https://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/ |
| BnF | Bibliothèque nationale de France |
| BYT | <i>Brut y Tywysogion, or The Chronicle of the Princes: Red Book of Hergest Version</i> . 1955. Edited by Thomas Jones. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. |
| <i>Cal. Anc. Pet.</i> | <i>Calendar of Ancient Petitions Relating to Wales</i> . 1935. Edited by J. Goronwy Edwards. Cardiff: University Press Board. |
| <i>Cal. Corr. Wales</i> | <i>Calendar of Ancient Correspondence Concerning Wales</i> . 1975. Edited by William Rees. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. |
| DB | <i>Domesday Book: A Complete Translation</i> . 1992. Edited by Ann Williams and G. H. Martin. London: Penguin. |
| DMF | <i>Dictionnaire du Moyen Français, 1330–1500, Version 15</i> . ATILF–CNRS, Université de Lorraine. http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/ |
| DMS | <i>Stanford's Digital Manuscript Index</i> . Stanford University. http://dms.stanford.edu |
| FEW | <i>Französisches etymologisches Wörterbuch</i> . 1928. Edited by Walther von Wartburg Bonn: Klopp. https://apps.atilf.fr/lecteurFEW/ |
| GDC | <i>Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IX^e au XV^e siècle: Complément</i> . 1893–1902. Edited by Frédéric Godefroy. 3 vols (8–10). Paris: Vieweg. http://micmap.org/dicfro/introduction/complement-godefroy |
| GDD | <i>Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IX^e au XV^e siècle</i> . 1880–1902. Edited by Frédéric Godefroy. 7 vols (1–7). Paris: Vieweg. http://micmap.org/dicfro/search/dictionnaire-godefroy/ |
| Germ | Germanic |
| <i>Gloucester Cart. S. Patri</i> | <i>Historia et Cartularum Monasterii Sancti Petri Gloucestriae</i> . 1863–1867. Edited by William Henry Hart. 3 vols. London: Longman et al. |
| GMW | <i>A Grammar of Middle Welsh</i> . 1976. Edited by D. Simon Evans. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. |
| GPC | <i>Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru. A Dictionary of the Welsh Language</i> . 1967–2002. Edited by R. J. Thomas, Gareth A. Bevan and P. J. Donovan. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. Online edition: http://welsh-dictionary.ac.uk/gpc/gpc.html |
| HA | <i>Historia Anglorum (The History of the English People)</i> . 1996. Edited and translated by Diana Greenway. Oxford: Oxford University Press. |
| LALME | <i>A Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval England</i> . 1986. Edited by Angus McIntosh, M. L. Samuels, Michael Benskin, with Margaret Laing and Keith Williamson. Aberdeen University Press. Electronic version (<i>eLALME</i>) revised and supplemented by Michael Benskin and Margaret Laing, wbescripts by Vasilis Karaiskos and Keith Williamson. 2013–. AHRC, |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| | Andrew W. Mellon Foundation–University of Edinburgh. http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/elalme/elalme.html |
| <i>Lewis and Short</i> | <i>A Latin Dictionary</i> . 1879. Edited by C. T. Lewis and C. Short. New York: Harper and Brothers. |
| <i>LIDC</i> | (Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin). <i>The Black Book of Carmarthen</i> . 1906. Edited by J. Gwenogvryn Evans. Pwllheli: (editor's private press). |
| <i>ME</i> | Middle English |
| <i>MED</i> | <i>Middle English Dictionary</i> . 1952–2001. Edited by Robert E. Lewis, et al. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Online edition in <i>Middle English Compendium</i> . 2000–2018. Edited by Frances McSparran, et al. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Library. https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/dictionary |
| <i>MFLCOF</i> | <i>Medieval Francophone Literary Culture Outside France</i> . 2011–2015. AHRC–King's College London, University College London, University of Cambridge. http://www.medievalfrancophone.ac.uk |
| <i>MLGB3</i> | <i>Medieval Libraries of Great Britain</i> . 2015. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Neil Ker Memorial Fund–Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford. 3rd ed. http://mlgb3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk |
| <i>MW</i> | Middle Welsh |
| <i>NLW</i> | National Library of Wales |
| <i>ODNB</i> | <i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> . 1885–. Oxford University Press. http://www.oxforddnb.com/public/index.html |
| <i>OE</i> | Old English |
| <i>OED</i> | <i>Oxford English Dictionary Online</i> . 1884–. Oxford: Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com |
| <i>OF</i> | Old French |
| <i>RB</i> | Red Book of Hergest |
| <i>RG</i> | <i>Rhyddiaith Gymraeg 1300–1425</i> . 2007–2013. Edited by Diana Luft, Peter Wynn Thomas, and D. Mark Smith. AHRC–Cardiff University. http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk |
| <i>TVOF</i> | <i>The Values of French Language and Literature in the European Middle Ages</i> . 2015–2020. ERC–King's College London. http://www.tvof.ac.uk |
| <i>TYP</i> | <i>Trioedd Ynys Prydein</i> : Bromwich, Rachel, ed. and trans. 2014. <i>Trioedd Ynys Prydein</i> . 4th ed. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. |

Introduction: Towards a Networked Middle Ages

1. Where is Wales? The ‘Celtic Fringe’ and the Problem of the Core-Periphery

Cum enim sitis sicut ceteri homines donis Dei gratuitis adornati, sed in vestro angulo devoramini (...) ut pæne nesciat mundus vos esse populum (ii, 476)

Although you are, like other men, adorned with the freely given gifts of God, you are consumed in your corner [of the world] (...) such that the world barely knows that you are a people.

Thus does John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, address Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, Prince of Wales, and his countrymen in a letter composed on the 14th November 1282. Anti-Welsh invectives are commonplace in medieval insular writings, and the archbishop is, in many ways, simply participating in this rhetoric. What is particularly notable about Peckham’s letter, however, are the *terms* in which his criticism of the Welsh is couched, namely that they are excessively preoccupied with their *angulus* of the world, their corner, edge, periphery. According to Peckham, the Welsh are so contained to their little corner of Britain that the wider *mundus*, for which the cosmopolitan archbishop feels entitled to speak, scarcely recognises their existence as a people at all. The text is all the more shocking for that it is no chronicle written for the ears of Englishmen: this is a letter composed on a diplomatic mission that was addressed and delivered to the Welsh prince himself.

Although remarkable in its virulence and format, Peckham’s letter is far from alone in representing medieval Wales as peripheral. By November 1282, the phenomenon already had a sizeable history. Take, for example, the episode in the mid twelfth-century *Gesta Stephani*, where the barons of King Stephen advise him not to venture, at a time of political turmoil in England, into the ‘remotas Waloniæ partes’ (§101, 194; the remote parts of Wales). The formulation’s genitive marks a telling slippage between the remote parts *of* Wales and the remote parts *that are* Wales. We might equally look at Henry of Huntingdon’s tactic of subsuming Wales within England itself as province and western periphery. In his *Historia Anglorum* (c. 1129, revised until c. 1154), Henry makes a slight, but significant elaboration on Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica* when he writes: ‘Hec autem insularum nobilissima cui quondam Albion nomen fuit, postea uero Britannia, *nunc autem Anglia*, inter septentrionem et occidentem sita est’ (i.2, 12, my emphasis; This most noble of islands, which once was called Albion, then Britain, *and now England*, is situated in the North West). As Julia Crick (forthcoming) notes, Henry’s remarkable declaration that ‘England was an island (...) silently wiped

England's neighbours off the map'. This political fiction of English insular hegemony is picked up by several later writers and texts: it is present, for example, in the short insular French Prose *Description of England* (c. 1206–16), found in London, British Library, Additional MS 14252, an early-thirteenth century London compilation steeped in baronial political ideology.¹ The text obsessively describes 'Bretaine, ki ore est apelé Engleterre' (Britain, which now is called England) no fewer than seven times, with an additional reference to 'Engleterre, que jadis fu apelé Bretanne' (§5, 329; England, which once was called Britain). A similar phenomenon is attested in a work contemporary with, though not necessarily influenced by, Henry's *Historia*: Geffrei Gaimar's *Estoire des Engleis*, composed in Lincolnshire c. 1136–37. Here, Gaimar explains:

tuzjurs sicom il conquera[i]ent,
des Engleis la reconuissaient:
la terre k'il vont conquerant
si l'apel[ei]ent Engeland.
Este vus ci un' acheson
parquei Bretaine perdi son nun. (ll. 29–34)

As they [the English] continued to conquer, they [the Britons] recognised the land being conquered as belonging to the English, and thus called it England. This is one explanation why Britain lost its name.

Again, *Bretaigne* has been replaced by *Engeland*, which eclipses all other peoples and cultures present in the British Isles.

The above is only a very cursory glance at a handful of texts, but I hope to have drawn out the one specific point that these twelfth- and thirteenth-century texts seem to be making, and nowhere clearer than in Archbishop Peckham's letter: Wales is, above all else, *peripheral*, provincial, contained to its *angulus* of the map, if it is on the map at all.

Or at least, according to a bunch of Englishmen, none of whose representations could be considered as in any way 'true to life'. As Crick (forthcoming) underlines, Henry of Huntingdon's statement 'defied political reality': the British Isles of Henry's *nunc* were marked by native Welsh resistance to Norman invasion, the continued rule of independent Welsh princes, and the independence of Scotland and Ireland. Similarly, we might read Peckham's designation of Wales' peripherality as performative rather than descriptive: it works to circumscribe the networks of Llywelyn and his people, to shut down their connections, and to put them in their peripheral place. Indeed, the very fact that Peckham feels compelled to do so betrays the fact that his image of Welsh peripherality is a fiction. The deployment in these texts of an aggressive Anglocentrism is, in short, a political-rhetorical strategy

¹ On this codex, see Wogan-Browne, Fenster, and Russell (2016, 15–18), Hanna (2005, 56, 70–72).

that deliberately denies contemporary realities in order to propound a politically useful, Anglo-supremacist ideology.²

Crucially, what these examples communicate is not only a clear *Anglocentrism*, but also a more fundamental subscription to a model of political and cultural geography that is governed by the logic of the core-periphery. In other words, the logical corollary of these Englishmen's marginalising of Wales is their centralising of England as a culturally and politically hegemonic core that exists in an asymmetric relation of power to its periphery.³

So much may be expected of medieval English commentators. But for modern medievalists to subscribe to the same core-periphery logic clearly poses considerable methodological and ethical problems. In the field of medieval British history, it is a pitfall against which Rees Davies eloquently warned in 2000's *The First English Empire*, writing that: 'It is one of the distorting prerogatives of a hegemonic culture, especially a written one, that history is largely written on its terms and using its categories' (119).⁴ In other words, the very fact that England enjoyed hegemonic status in the medieval British Isles — and therefore left behind the most significant textual record — has meant that its perspective has dictated and biased the means through which historians have gained access to that period ever since.⁵ Keith J. Stringer (1999, 199) neatly sums up the problem:

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries our terms of reference seem to lie conveniently to hand in the apparently remorseless growth of the English state, in its deliberate cultivation of an intensified sense of English political and cultural individuality, and in the supposed 'unity' of baronial society in Britain and Ireland. Yet we must remind ourselves once again that, however passionately the Westminster-centred government believed otherwise, defining the contours of power and identity in these islands was not solely its prerogative.

In short, the core-periphery model espoused by English writers like Peckham and Huntingdon only ever provides us with the viewpoint of the victors, and for scholars to buy into this fallacy is to

² Looking at the works and maps of Gerald of Wales, Kathy Lavezzo (2006) makes a similar claim for Ireland as the periphery that centres England. She writes that, even as the English embraced and valorised their own peripheral status (which is Lavezzo's principle thesis), 'Gerald endows the English with a civilizing centrality the wild Irish lack. (...) If not for Ireland, in other words, the marginality of the English would be absolute and hence insurmountable' (54). And, we might suggest, if not for Wales, too.

³ I am aware of the Marxist inflections of my use of the term 'hegemony', which I use to designate the dominant position in asymmetrical relations of power between political and cultural groups. The level of abstraction afforded by the term is, I have found, a useful way to avoid terms such as 'polity', 'state', 'country', or 'nation' that run the risk of anachronistically endowing the reigning power with a coherence and sovereignty that it did not necessarily possess. It also avoids the need to disentangle the terminologies of the specific occupiers of that position over the temporal parameters of this thesis (i.e. Norman, Anglo-Norman, Angevin, etc.).

⁴ Davies' use of 'hegemony' here, like my own, has Gramscian inflections, referring to Gramsci's formulation of cultural hegemony as the universalization of the *Weltanschauung* (world-view) of a particular ruling power or class. Indeed, this quite neatly describes the process I describe and critique here.

⁵ On the biasing of records by and towards central government, see also Karn (2012): 'Much of the work of local ruling has to be reconstructed from the records of other interested parties which inevitably depicted events from their own particular viewpoint. This relative shortage of evidence means that local government can mostly be approached through the archives of central government, and this inevitably skews how we can now understand local government' (743). On the issue of evidence disparity and Anglocentric history, see also Gillingham (2014, 4–5).

replicate, in a highly uncritical and unethical way, the logic of hegemonic medieval powers. Moreover, given that it is largely these same medieval powers that consolidate their hegemony in the post-medieval period, for us as medievalists to subscribe to such a model is also to shore up the teleology of their evolution into nation-states.⁶ Therefore, viewing the medieval world through the lens of the core-periphery effectively subordinates regional identities and languages to nationally sanctioned ones, reinforces the hegemony of centralised power, and fails to respect, or else blatantly co-opts, medieval texts composed before and outside the frameworks of modern national boundaries. Finally, and perhaps most problematically, modern replication of this model also serves to reduce so many locations, peoples, and cultures to the status of ‘periphery’, thus importing into scholarship a series of unethical value-judgements aligning the ‘peripheral’ with the politically powerless and culturally derivative.

Yet, ‘peripheral Wales’ is everywhere in modern scholarship and public discourse. Need we look any further than the still widely used (and frankly offensive) term, the ‘Celtic Fringe’? Not only does this term homogenise several distinct political, cultural, and linguistic communities, but it also buys into and re-enacts the logic of medieval hegemonies, positioning Wales (along with Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall, Brittany, Man, etc.) as ‘peripheries’ in relation to the hegemonic ‘core’ (i.e. England or France). The less used alternative, the ‘Celtic belt’, does little to resolve these problems, implying, as it does, the notion of Celtic-speaking regions simply girdling the central body of English and French territory. As much as it should be deleted from the vocabulary of any medievalist (and, for that matter, of any person), the ‘Celtic Fringe’ acts as a telling shorthand insofar as it articulates a mode of thinking operative in many modern works of historical, literary-historical, and literary-critical scholarship.

Take, for example, Hechter and Brustein’s model of Europe’s ‘Roman-Germanic core’, whereby a core of urbanisation and commerce in southern Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Belgium filters out into the feudal regions of France, England, and Spain (Hechter and Brustein 1980). As Hohenburg and Lees ([1985] 1995, 71–72) word it in their explanation of this model: ‘(...) the Celtic Fringe of western Europe was touched only lightly by the productive energies of long-distance trade and commercial agriculture. It remained pastoral, weakly urbanized, and virtually tribal in socio-political terms.’ Not only might we dispute such claims in and of themselves, but it should also be noted how such a model measures Celtic societies by an English, or core European, ‘gold standard’, against which they are found to be lacking. Indeed, the colonial rhetoric deployed here (‘virtually

⁶ See Geary (2002) for an excellent critique of this inheritance in modern scholarship of nineteenth-century medievalism and its retroactive superimposition of teleological nation-state narratives onto the early Middle Ages.

tribal') merely echoes the colonialism of the medieval English themselves. The spirit of Archbishop Peckham, it seems, lives on.

Yet, this kind of thinking is widespread, and conceptually underpins even highly influential work in medieval history. Take, for example, Robert Bartlett's 1993 *The Making of Europe*, which remains a key text in teaching and research. This work draws explicitly on core-peripheral thinking in order to describe European political geography as based on two cores out of which certain phenomena centrifugally emanate with the effect of creating a culturally homogenous 'medieval Europe'. The first of these cores is Rome, out of which a Latinate, Christian culture emanated, homogenising — to a degree — the cultures with which it came into contact. The second is Paris and the northern French region, the epicentre of the 'aristocratic diaspora' ([1993] 1994, 43) that resulted in a homogenisation of cultures in terms of their military custom, language, and literary culture, as well as their social, economic, and political systems.⁷ Bartlett reasserted this typology in a 2007 essay that sought to develop the terms 'heartland and border' in relation to what we might call medieval Europe's psychogeography. He formulates a 'concentric' model of medieval Europe centred on the Rome-Maastricht axis, its wider arable zone, and a surrounding 'string of pastoral societies' (like Brittany and Wales), who are only ever 'absorbed by their powerful, agrarian neighbours' in the 'arable heartlands' (29). He concludes that: 'The identity that emerged as normative, metropolitan and central in medieval western Europe was thus Roman and French' (36). But 'normative, metropolitan and central' for whom? Through whose eyes are we looking here?

The Celtic core-periphery is also, it seems, alive and well in literary studies. In Marcher contexts, we might take, for example, Susan Crane's analysis of Herefordshire-based poet Hue de Rotelande. Describing Hue's condition as one of 'social detachment' in his 'thoroughly provincial setting on the Welsh border' (143), Crane writes: 'Hue's evident devotion to Credenhill and Herefordshire establishes his isolation from even the English royal court, to a degree consonant with his poetry's unconventionality' (144). Suggesting an almost causal link between Hereford's (supposedly) 'isolated' geographical position and its (supposedly) idiosyncratic cultural products, such a statement makes a number of assumptions both about the supposed 'conventions' of poetry, and about the status of the Welsh borders. Another example might be Helen Fulton's 2008 reading of a

⁷ We might note overlap here with Rees Davies' model of 'Anglicisation' in Wales and Scotland during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (see Davies 2000a). For a revision of this model in the field of Scottish history, see Taylor (2016). An example of work that largely avoids these centrifugal models, and that accords greater agency to Welsh, Scottish, and Irish histories, is that of Robin Frame ([1990] 1995).

poem by Tudur Aled (c. 1465–1525) praising the Marcher town of Oswestry.⁸ She describes his references to goods newly available to Welsh markets not as an example of Welsh participation in insular-continental trade networks, but as an ‘invasion of English urban consumerism into traditional Welsh life’ (2008, 208). Similarly, Fulton interprets Tudur’s reference to London’s *Siêp-Seid* (Cheapside) as revealing ‘a subjectivity that is located in the periphery and yet drawn inexorably, like a moth to a flame, to the metropolis, the heart and center of economic and colonial power’ (2008, 208). She concludes that: ‘In its attraction to the center, the periphery confirms its own marginality’ (2008, 208).

Finally, the core-periphery model is also operative in what is, since R. R. Davies’s seminal 1974 article, surely the dominant critical mode of framing medieval Wales, namely, as England’s first colony.⁹ The colonial analogy has been a productive one in several respects, but does also pose a number of problems. Some scholars have critiqued the historical relevance of the colonial model to medieval Wales, given the absence of several features of modern colonialism (Walker 1990, 65), and given Wales’ position vis-à-vis Anglo-Norman England as that of a ‘neighbouring territory with a shared Latinity, a shared religion, and shared borders’ (Gaunt 2009, 164). Other scholars have warned against undue anachronism (Chibnall 1986, 122), and the inconsistency in historians’ use of colonial models has also been critiqued (West 1999, 225).

Perhaps more probing critiques of ‘colonial Wales’ might be made on both intellectual and ethical grounds. In the first instance, a key problem with accepting the premise of colonial Wales is that it risks validating England’s own colonial view of itself as metropole and of Wales as provincial *angulus*, without more fundamentally revising the logic that underpins that view.¹⁰ In the second, we might well question the legitimacy (and desirability) of claiming medieval colony status for what is now a western, majority-white nation with its own post-medieval history of colonialism.¹¹

⁸ For the text, see References (Tudur Aled): Jones (1926, i, 65, ll. 61–64; ll. 89–90).

⁹ This analogy is extended in Bartlett ([1993] 1994, esp. 77, 116, 217, 234).

¹⁰ This danger was evident in Fulton’s reading of Tudur Aled, in which she deploys the terminology of London as ‘metropolis’, the colonial ‘center’ in relation to which the ‘periphery confirms its own marginality’. Of course, it is precisely this kind of colonial thinking that critics working, for example, with postcolonial theory seek to deconstruct. A fruitful avenue of investigation in medieval literary studies more widely, postcolonial theory has been usefully explored in relation to the cultural products of medieval Wales and the March. See, for example, Kinoshita (2006, 105–32), Evans (2006), Faletra (2014). Still, suggestive and sophisticated as readings like these are — and they have been influential on my thinking in this thesis — their point of departure remains understanding medieval Wales in colonial terms, a premise that (as I suggest above) it might be just as productive *not* to accept.

¹¹ Equally, there was significant Welsh and Marcher involvement in the invasion of Ireland, blurring yet further the Welsh status of coloniser and colonised in the medieval period itself.

Of course, I in no way wish to deny that parallels might be usefully drawn with modern colonialism, nor do I wish to suggest that the relation of power between medieval (and, for that matter, modern) Welsh and English polities can be described as anything other than highly asymmetrical. However, if conceptualising medieval Wales as ‘colony’ risks, at best, anachronism and inconsistency, then it also risks the consolidation of an Anglocentric core-periphery, and a kind of accidental ‘self-peripheralisation’. At worst, it risks uneasily conflating the past of a majority-white, western power with the present of current and former colonised territories, possibly even dissimulating modern Wales’ own colonial history.

Thus we arrive at the key objectives and research questions of this thesis. Of course, many historians and literary critics would now flinch at some of the more flagrant core-peripheral thinking outlined above. Yet, these are the models that our disciplines have inherited, and which continue to inform and bias scholarship in subtle, even unconscious ways. What this discussion has aimed to demonstrate is that an alternative conceptual macro-structure needs to be actively elaborated, through which we might view the medieval period without privileging the perspectives of certain cultures because of their medieval (and post-medieval) claim to hegemony. Put differently: if we abandon the self-fulfilling and unethical core-periphery model, what other models can we elaborate for conceptualising medieval political and cultural geography? How might we restore a level of political and cultural agency to supposedly ‘peripheral’ peoples, cultures, and texts? How might we do so without resorting to a counter-appropriation of colony status? What might be a viable alternative?

2. What’s in a Network?

The model to which medievalists have been increasingly gesturing is undoubtedly that of the network, which has become omnipresent in recent scholarship either as its specified object of study or as a frequently deployed term in its critical idiom. As an image, networks provide a useful figure on which to hang approaches that seek to think beyond or outside of the core-periphery and the nationalist teleologies it subtends. Any number of volumes, monographs, and projects might be singled out here, including, notably, those pertaining to the Global Middle Ages, though a comprehensive overview of these kinds of scholarship is sadly beyond the remit of this introduction.¹² Suffice to say that many such

¹² A good example of work explicitly using networks to think about pre-modern history is Shepard (2018), and other contributions to the same volume. For Global Middle Ages projects, see the *Global Middle Ages Project* (G-

works have been key to my thinking in this thesis, including those unrelated to Wales and those selected here for critique.

Given the problems of the core-periphery discussed above, the move towards a more networked Middle Ages is a welcome one, though of its current manifestations two important critiques must be made. The first, which has already been made (Gaunt 2016), pertains to the restriction of so many research projects, outputs, and environments to the English-speaking world, even if non-Anglophone participation in this push is slowly increasing.¹³ The second problem, however, has been neither raised nor addressed, and it pertains to the failure of many network-oriented works rigorously to theorise their objectives, methodologies, and network models, thus leaving them vulnerable to certain intellectual missteps.

Take, for example, the monumental 2016 two-volume *Europe: A Literary History, 1348–1418*, edited by David Wallace. The volumes' structure, based on medieval itineraries, marks a clear move towards a more decentred, network-like vision of literary history, yet it remains problematic in a few key ways. Firstly, the itinerary structure is fundamentally linear and prevents proper consideration of networks' multidirectionality: for example, the route from St Andrews to Finistère, although connecting a series of locations in the Irish Sea zone, fails to connect them transversally to English and continental centres. Secondly, certain routes, especially through medieval England and France, are accorded their own entire itineraries, while others, for example the six language regions of the 'Celtic' route, are accorded only one itinerary between them. All of Wales is covered by a single chapter split between Llanbadarn Fawr and Strata Florida. The result is that routes like the French and English ones largely resemble the shape of their modern nation states: why, for example, are Béarn and Toulouse included in an itinerary from Northern France, rather than one through Occitania/Catalonia? Moreover,

MAP) at the Universities of Texas and Minnesota (<http://globalmiddleages.org>); *Global Middle Ages* in Sydney at the University of Sydney (http://sydney.edu.au/arts/research/global_middle_ages/); the *Defining the Global Middle Ages* network in the UK between the Universities of Oxford, Birmingham, and Newcastle, within the remit of the Centre for Global History at Oxford (<http://global.history.ox.ac.uk/projects>); and the *Scholarly Community for the Globalization of the 'Middle Ages' (SCGMA)* (<http://ichass.illinois.edu/index.php/ichass-projects/scholarly-community-for-the-globalization-of-the-middle-ages-scgma/>), based at the University of Illinois. For a history of this work, its intellectual objectives and problems, see Heng and Widner (2015), and Heng and Ramey (2014). For journals, see *The Medieval Globe* (<https://arc-humanities.org/our-series/arc/tmg/>). For exhibitions, see *Traversing the Globe through Illuminated Manuscripts* from Jan–Jun 2016 at The Getty Center in Los Angeles (<http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/globe/>). For degree programmes, see the University of Edinburgh's MA in Art in the Global Middle Ages: (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/postgraduate/degrees/index.php?r=site/view&id=608>). For a (somewhat reactionary) critique of 'global history' and the network metaphor, see Bell (2013).

¹³ Growing non-Anglophone engagement is certainly indicated, for French studies at least, by the significant European scholarly involvement in the conference in the 2016 conference in Paris *En Français hors de France* and in the current *The Values of French in the European Middle Ages* research project (KCL), as well as the recent publication of French-language engagements with Anglophone work in the Postcolonial and Global Middle Ages, such as Uhlig (2014).

the disparity in coverage itself recreates the core-periphery model within the volume's own critical apparatus — and, indeed, within its own institutional context, since an examination of the list of contributors reveals an overwhelming majority of scholars from US and UK (mainly English) universities. Thus, *Europe: A Literary History* represents a partially, but only partially, networked account of medieval literary history that still does not fully escape the core-periphery model from which it seeks to depart.

Similarly, historical works that *have* engaged with network theories often end up struggling with conceptual slippage between core-peripheral and network models.¹⁴ For example, Paul M. Hohenburg and Lynn Hollen Lees's 1985 *The Making of Urban Europe* contrast core-peripheral Central Place System (CPS) towns (which develop in a hierarchical relation to their agricultural hinterland) with Network System (NS) cities (which grow as hubs in international networks of trade, travel, and information), though acknowledge that 'Most larger cities have a place in both sorts of systems' (Hohenburg and Lees [1985] 1995, 71). Similarly, David Bates's *The Normans and Empire* (2013) features a whole chapter devoted to exploring 'the interplay of the imperial, national, regional, and local networks with the various cores and peripheries' of the Norman Empire (2013, 130). Yet, we might remark that, as soon as one pluralises the 'core', one is in fact dealing with a polycentric network. Meanwhile, Niall Ferguson's 2017 popular history *The Square and the Tower* also juxtaposes hierarchical institutions (the 'tower') with networks (the 'square') that resist or exceed them. Yet, this binary typology necessarily collapses, as Ferguson admits: 'far from being the opposite of a network, a hierarchy is just a special kind of network' (Ferguson [2017] 2018, 39).

My contention in this thesis is that networks might act as a conceptual macro-structure through which we might recalibrate our view of the medieval world and its political and cultural geographies *in contradistinction to* traditional models like the core-periphery. Like the core-periphery, networks are a kind of lens through which we look at the past and, like lenses, looking through two different ones at once risks blurring the picture. My argument is that networks might serve as a more accurate and ethical alternative. By this, I do not necessarily mean that we must limit ourselves to positivistically identifying specific global connections, though that is, of course, part of this work. What I wish to advocate, rather, is a thinking *with* and *through* networks as a way of conceiving of and

¹⁴ Or between other models entirely. Irad Malkin's *A Small Greek World* (2011), for example, explores 'small world' network theory, but blurs it with the figure of the Deleuzian 'rhizome', Richard White's 'middle ground', and Mary Louise Pratt's 'contact zone'.

articulating decentralised geographies across which cultural and political agency can be more ethically (and accurately) (re)distributed.

Before we are able to do so, however, it will be necessary to engage more rigorously with critical thinking about networks in order properly to delineate their conceptual contours. By this, however, I do not mean that we must engage, as scholars like Malkin and Ferguson have done, with the network typologies of scientists and mathematicians. Rather, my aim is to gain critical insight into networks as a conceptual model for thinking about agency, power, and politico-cultural geography.¹⁵ As such, I turn to recent social theories of the network, namely, those of the ‘network society’ and of the ‘actor-network’, which I situate in an intellectual history of classical social theory and Marxist thinking. In order to avoid producing a protracted theoretical introduction, specific elements of these network theories will be discussed in more detail the relevant chapters (mainly 2, 3, and 4). What follows in this section, then, is an account of these theories in the hope of formulating a rationale for why and how they might be productively explored by scholars of medieval history, literature, and culture.

2.A. *The Network Society*

Accounts of Marx’s thinking often pay attention to the network-like ways in which he envisaged society as a system of complexly interconnected phenomena. Ian Craib (1997), for example, argues that Marxist thought ‘sees each separate entity [in a society] as part of a network which comprises a whole, and each separate phenomenon can be understood only in terms of its relationship to the whole’ (41). Similarly, in his ‘Manifesto for a Relational Sociology’ (1997), Mustafa Emirbayer casts Marx, along with Simmel and even Durkheim, as one of the earliest transactional theorists in a history of relational thinking that would also include thinkers as diverse as Heraclitus and Einstein. To support his argument, Emirbayer refers to the oft-cited soundbite from *Das Kapital* in which Marx states ‘daß das Kapital nicht eine Sache ist, sondern ein durch Sachen vermitteltes gesellschaftliches Verhältnis zwischen Personen’ (Marx and Engels [1867] 1962, 793; that capital is not a thing, but a social relationship between persons that is mediated through things). It is the same quotation that Robert Prey (2012) uses to illustrate what he considers a current Marxist rehabilitation of the network metaphor,

¹⁵ As Malkin (2011) himself points out, a problem for humanities scholars engaging with network theory is that we, unlike our scientist colleagues, must allow for factors such as language, geography, and politics, because ‘real nodes have a “social identity” and contingent reasons for preferential attachments’ (40).

even going so far as to say that, for Marx, the network is constitutive of the human condition. As such, modern network technologies merely represent ‘an ingenious way of capturing the connective desires and practices that are internal to human relationality’ (2012, 263).

Whether or not they tap into some essential relationality, these developments in network technology (travel, telecommunications, Internet, etc.) have resulted in the ‘network society’ of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, as theorised by Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells. For Castells, the network society is organised around what he calls the ‘space of flows’ (of capital, information, etc.). In this space, electrical, communicational, and transport exchanges physically located in ‘hubs’ and ‘nodes’ (like exchanges, servers, airports, etc.) link individual localities into the global network: ‘In this network, no place exists by itself, since the positions are defined by the exchanges of flows in the network’ ([1996] 2010a, 442–43).

Needless to say, the image of these multimodal networks of multiple nodes and hubs that connect and relay communication in multidirectional channels across the globe offers a radically decentralising vision of the world and its geographies of power. For these networks do not exist in isolation from power. On the contrary, they are, according to Castells, subject to the hegemony of certain elites: ‘the space of flows is made up of personal micro-networks that project their interests in functional macro-networks throughout the global set of interactions in the space of flows’ ([1996] 2010a, 446). Castells gives the example of the financial world, where decisions made over a business lunch or a golfing weekend trigger global repercussions. However, power is not intrinsic to the elite individuals themselves; rather, it is constructed in those individuals’ *connections to the network*:

(...) la comunicación es el espacio en el que se construyen las relaciones de poder. Lo cual no quiere decir que los medios de comunicación tengan el poder. Esto empíricamente es falso: no tienen el poder. Son mucho más importantes que eso, porque son el espacio donde se construye el poder. Cualquier tipo de poder tiene que pasar por el espacio de la comunicación para llegar a nuestras mentes. (Castells 2012b; on these ideas see also Castells 2009, 10–53)

(...) communication is the space in which power relations are constructed. Which does not mean to say that the means of communication possess power. This is empirically false: they do not possess power. They are much more important than that, because they are the space where power is constructed. Any type of power must pass through the space of communication in order to reach our minds.

Thus, power, even hegemonic power, is conceptualised *as a network*. The network model does not compete with the core-periphery model of hegemony: these models are necessarily mutually exclusive. Networks are, so to speak, double edged, the modes through which ‘*cualquier tipo de poder*’ (*any type of power*), whether hegemonic or counter-hegemonic, constructs itself.

Let us take a modern example. Particularly in the wake of the 2018 Cambridge Analytica scandal, it has become almost commonplace to remark upon the co-optation of social media networks like Facebook by hegemonic power in the service of capitalism and totalitarianism. Yet, Castells, along with sociologists like Paulo Gerbaudo (2012), also maintains the counter-hegemonic potential of social networks.¹⁶ For instance, in *Networks of Outrage and Hope* (2012a), Castells considers the Internet as a prime example of counter-hegemonic networking enabling diverse types of users from across the globe to co-ordinate in anti-establishmentarian social movements such as Occupy Wall Street. The key point, however, is that the structure of the network here is not itself political. Rather, it provides the site for the construction and articulation of contesting political positions. The countless connections that are facilitated by its polycentric, multidirectional channels find themselves both hijacked by hegemonic elites, as well as re-appropriated by grassroots users.

2.B. Actor-Network Theory

As useful as Castells' work is for theorising the modern-day network society, the conceptual model with which this thesis engages most extensively comes from Actor-Network Theory (ANT), a highly suggestive, if frustratingly elusive, body of theory developed mainly by Bruno Latour during the 1980s.¹⁷ Since then, ANT has been criticized by several scholars, not least its own practitioners, for being at once apolitical and hyper-political, for excessive relativism, and for dissolving human agency and, thus, ethical responsibility.¹⁸ Social network theorist Charles Kadushin (2012, 218 n. 2) endnotes his single reference to it as 'neither about networks nor theory', and Latour (1999a) himself has suggested 'abandoning what is so wrong with ANT, that is "actor", "network", "theory" without forgetting the hyphen!' (24).

¹⁶ In this sense, network technologies might remind us of an earlier debate in Marxist theory, notably between Walter Benjamin ([1935] 1966) and Theodor Adorno ([1963] 1977; [1970] 1997), over the revolutionary capacity of 'mechanical reproduction'. Castells's optimism concerning networks cannot help reminding one of Benjamin's attitude to the mechanical means of reproduction in his famous essay from nearly a century earlier. Meanwhile, if we were to look for a modern counterpart to Adorno's skepticism, we might look to Jan van Dijk (2005) for whom the 'digital divide' between those who have access to network technologies and those who do not is both widening and deepening, meaning that 'digital inequalities' are attaching themselves to and reinforcing existing social inequalities such as age, gender, ethnicity, labour, and education.

¹⁷ Latour's oeuvre is rich and varied. Although no single volume can (or should) hope to explain it fully, I have found de Vries (2016) and Blok and Jensen (2011) to be useful companions and introductions.

¹⁸ On these, see Latour (1999a, 16; 2005, 251–52, 256). On the 'epistemological chicken' debate, see Collins and Yearley (1992) and the response of Callon and Latour (1992). See also the later 'Anti-Latour' debate between Bloor (1999) and Latour (1999b). For a discussion of the various charges brought against ANT, and a defence against them, see McGee (2014, 27–30).

By bringing ANT into this discussion I do not wish to blur the network yet further with the actor-network: indeed, as Latour himself makes clear, these are not the same thing (Latour 1996, 369; 2005, 131, 142). Nor do I wish definitively to ascribe to ANT any monolithic meaning, purpose, or even textual corpus, for as Steven D. Brown and Rose Capdevila (1999) warn: ‘any attempt to uncover some as yet unrevealed inner principle at the core of this heterogeneous series of texts (...) is utterly misguided’ (29). Indeed, in keeping with this advice, I offer here no long-view survey of ANT; rather, I base my engagement with ANT primarily on Latour’s 2005 work *Reassembling the Social*, a kind of introduction after-the-fact to Actor-Network Theory, where Latour explains ANT’s origins, objectives, and key conceptual tools. Moreover, although Latour distinguishes the actor-networks of ANT from those of Castells’s network society (2005, 139), ANT may nevertheless act as a valuable interlocutor with Castells as an alternative approach to ideas of power and agency as configured and articulated by the image of the network.

As it is formulated by Latour in *Reassembling the Social* (2005), ANT responds to — or, as Latour puts it, ‘feeds off’ (16) — what it sees as ‘sources of uncertainty’ in mainstream sociology, which Latour labels the ‘sociology of the social’ (8–12). The first source is the supposed fixity of groups: for ANT groups are not static, but mobile; they form and reform via the connections they make. As Latour writes, ‘there exists no society to begin with, no reservoir of ties, no big reassuring pot of glue to keep all those groups together (...) [the grouping] is not a building in need of restoration but a movement in need of continuation’ (2005, 37). The second source is the notion of sovereign, independent agency. For ANT, agency is fundamentally inter-*subjective* and inter-*objective*, with *actants* always being moved to act by, and always acting upon, other actors in networks of intersecting agencies. These intersections also extend through time: encounters are always preformatted by what Latour calls *articulators*, *localisers*, and *plug-ins* (193–213). The third source of uncertainty is the restriction of agency to the human: ANT draws attention to the agencies of objects and of the nonhuman world, a point to which I will return in Chapter 3. The fourth source of uncertainty is the supposed possibility of knowledge: stemming from its roots as a sociology of science, ANT argues that what are presented as *matters of fact* are only ever *matters of concern*, that is, always encoded in certain interpretive frameworks. The fifth and final source of uncertainty is the account itself (see §6 below).

Thus, whereas Castells and others find it unproblematic to develop and critique models of the *network society*, Latour maintains this collocation as a fundamental contradiction in terms. In a revision of the famous neoliberal, Thatcherite soundbite, for ANT there is no such thing as society; rather, there is only a *collective*, wherein the world appears as a series of complex, mobile networks of interactions between quasi-agents, including but not limited to human beings, who are always acting on and being acted on by other agents, *none of whom can lay any claim to hegemony*. In other words, ANT's world of renewing, reconstructing networks is incompatible with the notion of 'society' as a pre-established, overarching structure.

It should be emphasised, moreover, that ANT is less a *theory of networks* than it is a *method with networks*; as Latour words it in a 1996 article, ANT is 'more an infralanguage than a metalanguage' (1996, 375). Indeed, *Reassembling the Social* is, as Latour puts it, a 'how-to guide' (2005, 17) — or, as is perhaps more the case, a how-not-to guide — for what Latour calls 'following the actors themselves', that is, for tracing their associations, their groupings, their actor-networks. Thus, for ANT, tracing the actor-network *is* the analytic process, *is* the interpretative gesture, *is* the critical methodology. This is why Latour suggests that the *network of actor-network* might be better termed a *work-net* since this 'could allow one to see the labour that goes on in laying down *net-works*' (2005, 132). In other words, we are not limited, as in Castells, to describing networks already out there in the world whose politics may be more or less co-opted by hegemonic elites; rather, in ANT, a counter-hegemonic political position *is intrinsic to the deployment of the network itself*. This point is made clearest at the conclusion to *Reassembling the Social*:

Is it not obvious then that only a skein of weak ties, of constructed, artificial, assignable, accountable, and surprising connections is the only way to begin contemplating any kind of fight? I think it would be much safer to claim that action is possible only in a territory that has been opened up, flattened out, and cut down to size in a place where formats, structures, globalization, and totalities circulate inside tiny conduits, and where for each of their applications they need to rely on masses of hidden potentialities. If this is not possible, then there is no politics. (Latour 2005, 252)

But fighting what? Let us take one of Latour's own examples: capitalism. Instead of talking of the overarching system of capitalism, or of what we might be tempted to call 'capitalist discourse', ANT tells us to locate the specific trading room in Wall Street and its connections to a network of other trading rooms internationally, all of them reliant on the co-operation of non-human materials and technologies. As Latour puts it: 'capitalism has no plausible enemy since it is 'everywhere', but a given *trading room* in Wall Street has many competitors' (2005, 178). Only by (re)framing 'capitalism' within a polycentric network structure — only, that is, by opening it up and flattening it out into

chartable, locatable, materially connected sites — are we able to identify its weak points and, ultimately, deconstruct its hegemony.

Thus, despite accusations that ANT depoliticises, the entire theoretical project is, in a sense, governed by and geared towards a key political imperative. ANT, therefore, *does* have potential as a political theory, one even more radical than that of the *network society* since it does not rely upon real-world networks (digital, social, etc.), but upon the actor-network as a conceptual structure, as a critical tool, as an analytic move in itself.¹⁹

Why, then, should this be of any interest to medievalists? The answer might be best formulated as another question: what if we were to replace ‘capitalism’ with ‘Anglocentric political geography’? Or ‘Francocentric literary history’? By submitting these ‘global’ discourses to the actor-network methodology, by charting their material connections, by locating their many ‘competitors’ (i.e. those texts and regions that dispute their hegemony), we too may be able to identify their ‘weak ties’, deconstruct their hegemonic status, and, in so doing, redistribute a critical degree of political and cultural agency to any number of cultures and regions once dismissed as ‘peripheral’. In this way, thinking with networks — thinking *rigorously* with networks *in contradistinction* to models like the core-periphery — might provide a new and more ethical model for interpreting medieval political and cultural geographies and literary histories.²⁰

¹⁹ This political potential of thinking with networks continues to be developed by Latour. Many consider Latour to have distanced himself from ANT in recent years in favour of his theory of *modes d'existence* (2012): the very blurb of the English edition of *Enquête sur les modes d'existence* describes it as ‘a research protocol different from the actor-network theory with which his name is now associated’. The original French edition makes no such rupture. Indeed, the AIME project is inflected in several ways by Latour’s work on ANT. The connection is explicitly addressed in the FAQ of the AIME website (a collaborative online platform), which explains how ANT figures as the [NET] approach within AIME, one of the two modes essential for making the inquiry feasible (the other is ‘prepositions’ [PRE]). See: <http://modesofexistence.org/-faq>. The overlaps of ANT and AIME also emerge in the *Enquête*. As Latour writes, for the *enquêteur* (inquirer) there are no ‘anciens domaines’ of Science, Law, Religion, Economy, etc.; there are only *réseaux* that associate elements borrowed from all of them, elements redistributed differently each time in an interconnectedness that usually only becomes apparent when it ceases to function (43). Latour gives the example of gas pipelines, which (although a kind of physical network in themselves) also rely on networks connecting steel tubes, pumping stations, international treaties, Russian mafia, pylons set in permafrost, cold technicians, and Ukrainian politicians: ‘Avez-vous prévu ce lien entre l’Ukraine et la cuisson de votre risotto ? Non.’ (2012, 44 ; Had you foreseen this link between Ukraine and the cooking of your risotto? No.). Networks continue, therefore, to underscore Latourian redistributions of agency in ways that deconstruct nebulous discourses and *domaines*, and that render visible the power of nonhumans, technologies, and institutions.

²⁰ In many other ways, too, ANT seems to be a remarkably medievalist-friendly approach. For example, one of Latour’s foundational premises — that there is no such thing as society — might strike medievalists as an eminently relevant way of thinking about power and hegemony in medieval Europe. As Susan Reynolds (1997, 111) has written, it is clear that ‘no medieval ruler (...) was sovereign in the way that later theorists of the sovereign state or nation-state would require’. Instead, government was, according to John Watts (2009), negotiated in large part and until late in the period in ‘face-to-face context[s]’ through ‘flexible justice, mercy and anger, gifts, bribes, and compromises, tacit understandings, rewards’ (32). In other words: through networks of interpersonal relations constantly forming and reforming and in need of constant renewal. In fact, the very notion of the itinerant court makes visible the need for hegemonic power constantly to reform its groupings, to renew its

2.C. Networks and Methodology

The case study methodology of this thesis is, in large part, motivated and justified by its theoretical engagements. I appreciate, however, that this may appear a somewhat counterintuitive claim. One of the limitations of the actor-network — and, perhaps, of the network image more fundamentally — is that it seems to leave us with little to say about the gaps between the nets, what Latour calls the ‘plasma’: ‘that which is not yet formatted, not yet measured, not yet socialized, not yet engaged in metrological chains, and not yet covered, surveyed, mobilized, or subjectified’ (2005, 244). Like Lacan’s vase ([1959–1960] 1986, 144–48), the (actor-)network is only made intelligible by the void it dialogically produces. This problem becomes even greater for scholars working on a historical period for which much evidence has already been lost, and where a lack of evidence can itself be highly telling. The problem becomes greater still for scholars working on a region like Wales, where the loss of evidence is often stark. For example, in a monastic context, Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan (2013) attributes ‘the staggering extent of the losses of liturgical and other monastic manuscripts’ (212) to various factors including warfare and the Dissolution, which adversely affected Welsh retention of monastic codices due to the absence of any Welsh universities and the lower status of Welsh cathedrals. These issues are compounded by the difficulty of identifying manuscripts *as Welsh* on palaeographic or codicological grounds. In other words, we are dealing with a lot of plasma.

For both actor-network theorists and medievalists alike, this presents somewhat of an empiricist impasse: if, as historians and literary critics, we select our case studies on the basis of available evidence, then we will, to an extent, *necessarily* find evidence of networked activity. If the actors are there, then it is *because* they are part of the networks. We risk, therefore, making the networks speak for the plasma, making the *local* speak for the *global*.

Thinking with networks may, however, help us to rethink the teleological link between local and global. Indeed, what ANT forces us to contemplate is, precisely, the possibility that the ‘locals’ may not add up to a ‘global’, and that we cannot simply refocus our optic of analysis between the two. Thus, whereas Castells locates and critiques interactions between society’s micro- and macro-level networks, ANT cannot ‘zoom from the global to the local and back’ (Latour 1999a, 18). For Latour, the social is, instead, ‘a certain type of circulation’ (Latour 1999a, 18–19), ‘a very peculiar movement of re-association and reassembling’ (2005, 7), ‘a movement in need of continuation’ (2005, 37). In a

ties, to reconfirm its very claim to hegemony. Borrowing Latour’s retooling of the Thatcherite soundbite, we might say that there is, perhaps, no such thing as *medieval* society either.

sense, then, *all we have are case studies*. If we are to avoid reifying society, if we cannot assume the existence of an overarching ‘global’, then all we are left with is a series of ‘locals’, where the axis of analysis must be reoriented from the vertical to the horizontal. If it is no longer possible to extrapolate from the local to the global, or to exemplify the global with the local, then we must turn to a mode of analysis that is translocal, multi-sited, and interconnected. In ANT terms, the territory is flattened out.

It is in these terms that I have sought to structure and position the case study methodology of this thesis. Of course, case study methodologies are by no means a new technology, and this thesis is hardly the first to deploy them. Historians have long used case studies and micro-histories that use more narrowly defined local examples to illustrate and interrogate broader concepts, issues, and events.²¹ Indeed, some of the earliest works in the development of ANT — in particular Latour’s *Les Microbes : guerre et paix* ([1984] 2001) and *Aramis ou l’amour des techniques* (1992) — also take (at least partially) the form of historical case studies, though Latour does not discuss this methodology at any length.²²

It is worth articulating, then, exactly how this thesis conceives of its methodology. It is perhaps easiest to explain in the negative first: the three key case studies in this thesis are *not* designed to stand in metaphorically for all of Wales or even all of the March, which remains a region where culture, language, and political affiliation range greatly between any given loci. Nor are these case studies served up as a mere *illustration*, in three declinations, of what ‘peripheral’ or ‘Marcher’ culture looks like globally. Rather, it is precisely by analysing these interconnected case studies *translocally* (that is, by moving my analyses between plural sites that remain locally specific) that a more forceful argument can be formulated against the geo-cultural model by which they have been framed.²³

Thus, these case studies are in, a sense, ‘expériences *in vivo*’. They are attempts to freeze-frame that ‘peculiar movement’ of the social, to reconstruct certain moments of social assemblage. To ‘freeze-frame’ is, in this context, a self-consciously chosen verb: my objective is, precisely, to provide

²¹ A classic example of this approach might be Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie’s 1975 work *Montaillou*, which used the eponymous southern French village to explore the phenomenon of Catharism. A recent analogue might be Suzannah Lipscomb’s *The Voice of Nîmes* (2019), which explores religious and women’s history through evidence from early-modern Nîmes.

²² One notable reference appears in a footnote in *Les Microbes*, where Latour describes ‘Toute étude de cas historique’ (any historical case study) as ‘une expérience *in vivo*, sur la définition de ce que sont les groupes, ce qu’ils veulent, et jusqu’à quel point on peut négocier avec eux’ ([1984] 2001, 104: an *in vivo* experiment, in defining what the groups are, what they want, and how far we can negotiate with them).

²³ Of course, given that my test cases are chronologically spread out (from the late twelfth to early fourteenth centuries), my mode of analysis is not only translocal but also transtemporal. Although, as I explain in §3B below, I do not seek to dissimulate local difference, or to impose continuity where there is none, I hope that the transtemporalism of my analysis will also serve to reinforce my argument against core-peripheral geo-cultural models.

snapshots of networks that are constantly reassembling, to isolate three moments in a process that is dynamic, on-going, always moving. To translate that into disciplinary terms: these case studies are attempts to reassemble three cultural centres at specific moments in time, looking through the optics of textual and manuscript production, circulation, and consumption. I do so not with the intention of uniting them as an ontological or epistemological unit (see below §3b), but of critiquing and revising core-peripheral models of politico-cultural geography. I do not propose, therefore, that these case studies are *representative* of anything more than what they are. I *do* suggest that what they *are* is enough to prompt us to rethink the geo-cultural and geo-political models with which we frame them.

What this section has sought to achieve is, in the first instance, to define more clearly the theoretical contours of the network as a model fundamentally incompatible with the core-periphery. Secondly, it has sought to suggest ways in which thinking with networks might be positively and productively explored by medievalists.

To be clear: what I am proposing here is emphatically *not* a whole-scale importation into medieval studies of network or actor-network theory (if such definable corpora even exist). For a start, the above represents only my own readings of Latour and Castells, and is in no way forwarded as an objective introduction to their works. Rather, I engage with these theories only insofar as I think they can be usefully retooled and developed by and for medievalists. My intention has, therefore, been to recuperate these theories' latent conceptual, ethical, and methodological potential for medievalists, that is, to show how they might help us theorise networks more clearly as an alternative way of thinking about geography, agency, and power in the medieval world.²⁴

Chapter 2 will further develop my discussion of networks in terms of its implications for literary criticism and will demonstrate ways in which we might 'read with networks'. Chapters 3 and 4 will push further the possibilities offered by this networked mode of reading in terms of nonhuman

²⁴ Nor are these the only theoretical engagements that I have found useful. I have also found work on cosmopolitanism/cosmopolitics helpful for rethinking core-periphery relations, in particular the work of Etienne Balibar on Europe as borderland (1998; 2009). Although Balibar ultimately tries to dispense with them, network models like those of Castells (whom he cites) underlie much of Balibar's own 'borderland' model. For Balibar, modern Europe as a 'univocal, absolute idea' is, as Emily Apter (2017) writes, undermined both by its status as 'a complex of overlapping borderlands, displaceable boundaries, and disparate modes of governance', and by the networks of mobile individuals and communities that cut across them, because of their privileged or exploited positions within capitalist, colonial systems (e.g. international elites, refugees, etc.). This also seems an eminently relevant way to think about the politico-cultural organisation of medieval Europe and about the movements of communities and individuals across it, be they ecclesiasts and nobles or Jewish and *Romani* communities (on these two latter, see Heng 2018b, 55–109, 417–55).

agency and language. However, given ANT's imperative to 'follow the actors', it is high time that I introduced my own more properly, and so it is to the Welsh Marches that my discussion now turns.

3. The Medieval Welsh Marches

The previous section has argued that thinking with networks might provide a way of restoring political and cultural agency to regions and communities considered hitherto as merely 'peripheral'. What better, then, for a network-oriented study, than to look directly at the so-called 'periphery' itself?²⁵ What better than to ask if its historical evidence and cultural artefacts corroborate its 'peripheral' status and, thereby, the model by which that status is conferred? Or do they, instead, configure their locales — and prompt us in turn to *reconfigure* them — as centres connected in wider networks, such as those of trade, travel, cultural traffic, etc.? Finally, what are the implications for such a reconfiguration in the face of both medieval and modern hegemonies?

These are the questions that I aim to explore in relation to the case study of this thesis, namely, the regions of the Welsh Marches, from which I have selected three temporally and locally defined test cases: Hereford, 1180–1210; Ludlow, 1310–1350; Cwm Tawe, 1380–1410.²⁶ Given the ascription — as witnessed in §1 — of 'peripheral' status to these regions in both modern and medieval historiography, the Marches offer an ideal test-case for the approach developed in this thesis. The following, then, is an explanation of the Marches (primarily for non-specialists) of the way in which this study deploys the term, and of the reasons for, and implications of, selecting them as a case study for this thesis.

3.A. *The Welsh Marches: An Introduction*

Put simply, the Welsh Marches were created when William the Conqueror positioned his most trusted allies (namely, Hugh d'Avranches, first earl of Chester [d. 1101], William fitz Osbern, first earl of Hereford [d. 1071], and Roger de Montgomery, first earl of Shrewsbury [d. 1094]) along the Welsh border with the aim of subduing the resistant populations living there and beyond. The Marches were a

²⁵ Indeed, for Spivak (2012), this move is key to cosmopolitical thinking: 'Instead of moving from the imperial metropole to the colonies (...) we begin at the so-called periphery' (110).

²⁶ In retrospect, other case studies might have proven equally fruitful, and I suggest some possible avenues of future investigation in the thesis conclusion. For two excellent recent historical projects on case study Marcher urban settlements, including groundbreaking digital maps, see *City Witness: Place and Perspective in Medieval Swansea* (<http://www.medievalswansea.ac.uk/en/>); *Mapping Medieval Chester: Place and Identity in an English Borderland City, c. 1200–1500* (<http://www.medievalchester.ac.uk/index.html>). See also the edited volumes arising from the projects (Clarke 2013; 2017). For the two Welsh case studies in *Europe: A Literary History* (Llanbadarn Fawr and Strata Florida), see Fulton (2016).

land of internal and external borders — between Marcher lordships and English border counties; between Marcher lordships and Welsh controlled territories and, later, the post-1216 Principality; between Marcher lordships themselves; between conquered lowlands and Welsh-controlled uplands; between urban settlements and resistant rural areas; and, later, between Englishries and Welshries within Marcher lordships themselves. Although medieval frontiers are far from homogenous, it is clear that the Welsh Marches were a world of borders.²⁷

The earliest form of the term *Marchie Wallie* is found in Domesday Book of 1086, designating certain villis of Ralph de Mortimer and Osbern fitz Richard which lay in the westernmost borders of Herefordshire (*DB 506 in marcha de Wales* [183d]; 515 *in Marcha de Walis* [186d]). The term grew in popularity, however, roughly from the 1160s, from which point it is used more frequently in official English chancery and exchequer records. Max Lieberman (2010, 6–8) argues that the term was first and most closely connected to the Shropshire–Powys border: 1166 sees the term appear in the Pipe Rolls in connection with Shropshire, and soon features in the Pipe Roll for Worcestershire (in 1167), Herefordshire (in 1173), and Gloucestershire (in 1184). The term eventually expanded from these ‘border lordships’ — that is, frontier lordships in the western reaches of the ‘English’ border counties — to encompass the ‘conquest lordships’, that is, lordships established by conquest of Welsh-controlled land (Lieberman 2010, 19).

There is, however, a key difference between the ‘Marcher lordships’ — as units of land that can be (however fraught the attempt) geographically marked out — and the ‘Welsh Marches’ — as a perceived space of cultural contact in medieval Britain. More specifically: the latter is not limited to the former, and this point is as true for medieval commentators as it is for modern ones. English officials, for instance, had great difficulty in disentangling Marcher lordships from English counties from Wales *tout court*, and frequently collapsed one into the others. Nowhere is this truer than of my first test case, Hereford at the turn of the thirteenth century. Although early fourteenth-century Ludlow and late fourteenth-century Glamorgan do safely qualify as ‘Marcher lordships’, Hereford was ‘clearly part and parcel of the shire-system of England’ (Davies 1978, 16).²⁸ At best, the earl of Hereford was often *also* a Marcher lord, due to his lordship over border or conquest lordships (for instance, Miles of Gloucester, earl from 1141–1143, was also Marcher lord of Brecknock). More importantly, such technicalities over

²⁷ For a typology of medieval frontier societies, see Abulafia (2002).

²⁸ See Davies (1978, 16–17) also for a definition of the historian’s March and of the territories it includes and excludes. Barrow (2003, 41) also notes that the shire operated ‘legally and administratively (...) exactly as did the neighbouring shires to the east’.

Hereford's 'English' or 'Marcher' status were frequently overshadowed by its cultural associations with, and geographic proximity to, Wales.²⁹ In exchequer records produced in London, Hereford is systematically referred to as Hereford *in Wallia* (Davies [1987] 2000b, 7). English chroniclers also frequently refer to Hereford in this way.³⁰ Take, for instance, Henry of Huntingdon's account of Geoffrey Talbot holding Hereford castle against King Stephen in 1138: 'Quidam namque proditorum nomine Talebot tenuit contra regem castellum Herefordie in Wales' (*HA* 1138, 712; For one of the traitors, by the name of Talbot, held against the king the castle of Hereford in Wales). Another example can be found in one of this thesis's key texts, Walter Map's *De nugis Curialium*, in which Walter refers to Lydbury North as 'in terris Wallie sita' (ii.12, 158; located in the land of Wales) though today it lies in southwest Shropshire and is recorded in Domesday as part of the Rinlau hundred in the same county, held by the Bishop of Hereford (*DB* 689).³¹

Naturally, warfare and confrontation were fundamental features of this highly militarised, politically fragmented society, but so too were cross-cultural co-operation, contact, and cross-pollination. In terms of seigneurial governance and administration, for example, the testimonies of several Marcher lordships point towards highly hybridised Welsh–English systems.³² Some Welshmen even attained high-level positions in the seigneurial machines of their Marcher lordships (Davies 1978, 206–7; Lieberman 2010, 207). Similarly, Marcher Law was, as Rees Davies (1978, 162) puts it, 'a plural law, drawing on two (at least) legal traditions and catering for two peoples'. It made allowances, for example, for inherited Welsh customs such as *rhaith* (compurgation), *sarhad* (trespass), *amobr* (virginity-dues), and *galanas* (blood-feud compensation), for the *gwely* (equivalent to the Anglo-Saxon hide, or continental *mansus*), for the *progenies* (descent-group) and *parentela* (the four-generation agnatic kindred used for land-inheritance), and for the practice of *cyfran* (partibility) (see Davies 1978, 160–62, 363–72). Even in terms of military technology, cross-cultural contact is visible in, for example, the Marchers' adoption of the longbow and lance from Welsh military conventions. In order better to counter Welsh aggression, March dwellers also developed specific troop types such as the

²⁹ On Welsh immigration to Hereford, see Barrow (1999). On the influence of Welsh language and culture in Herefordshire, see Meecham-Jones (2008, esp. 31–33) and Lampitt (2017).

³⁰ Barrow states that this term was 'for administrative convenience, to ensure it was not confused with Hertfordshire' (2003, 41, n. 29). This explanation may hold, though it does not account for its presence in non-administrative contexts (e.g. chronicles like Henry of Huntingdon's), nor does it prevent the phrase's *effect* of systematically (re)producing a clear association between Hereford and the cultural and political orbits of *Wallia*.

³¹ See also *Open Domesday*: <http://opendomesday.org/place/SO3585/lydbury-north/>.

³² See, for example, Lieberman's examination of Clun, Oswestry, and Caus (2010, 189–217). On Dyffryn Clwyd, see Barrell, Davies, Padel, and Smith (1996) and Jones (2017).

montatores (light horse units) used at Oswestry or the mounted *siuentes* and infantry paid for by John Lestrange at Oswestry, Clun, Montgomery, Shrewsbury, and Ellesmere castles (Suppe 1994, 19–33).³³

Another aspect of this cross-cultural contact is linguistic. Much of this thesis, and Chapter 4 in particular, is devoted to exploring the multilingualism of the Welsh Marches, but it is worth flagging up at this early stage that the Marches were probably one of the most multilingual regions of medieval Europe.³⁴ As in England, 1066 saw the arrival in Wales of French-speakers not only from Normandy, but also Maine, Artois, Picardy, Beauvaisis, Burgundy, and the Île de France, as well as speakers of Breton and Flemish (Chibnall 1986, 10–11; Davies [1987] 2000b, 82). Flemings quickly settled in Welsh coastal areas around the Tywi estuary, in Ceredigion, and, especially, in western Dyfed in the *cantrefi* of Rhos and Daugleddau (Davies [1987] 2000b, 98–99).

Multilingualism in the Welsh Marches is unusual both in terms of density — the Marches were, after all, a considerably smaller area than Anglo-Norman England — and of the number of languages present. It features not only the Latin, French, and English present in England, but also Breton, Flemish, and the vernaculars present in Wales prior to invasion (not only Welsh but also, particularly in the north and west, Irish and Hiberno-Norse). Add into the mix the mobility of particular individuals in certain transregional networks (e.g. ecclesiastic ones) and the list of languages grows even longer. For example, as I have noted elsewhere (Lampitt 2017), in Hereford and its border region alone, from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, it is possible to trace the presence of speakers of combinations of not only English, French (continental and insular), Welsh, and Latin, but also of German, Dutch, Hebrew, Occitan, Danish, and Arabic. To be sure, several of these languages are restricted to certain regions (such as Cambro-Flemish settlements), communities (such as Jewish ones) or, occasionally, individuals (like the Dutch ecclesiast at Hereford Cathedral). Equally, the presence of certain languages ended at earlier dates than for others. However, what is clear is that, at any given point in the centuries following (and also preceding) 1066, any synchronic snapshot of the March reveals an unusual level, density, and modality of language co-existence and multilingualism.

A final point to note about the Welsh Marches is the unusual level of political and legal independence from the English Crown that the Marcher lordships enjoyed.³⁵ There is still debate as to

³³ On the Welsh adoption of Anglo-Norman and English models of lordship, warfare, etc., see also Pryce (2007, esp. 40–41).

³⁴ On multilingualism in medieval Wales, see Fulton (2011a), Smith (1986; 1997; 2000), Putter (2011).

³⁵ On this see Davies (1978, 217–28; 1979, 58–59), Holden (2008, 151–65), Lieberman (2010, 218–45), Frame (2007).

the precise origins of these so-called Marcher liberties, but it is clear that the feudal bond between the King and his tenants-in-chief was at its most tenuous in the case of the Marcher lords, often only extending to nominal pledges of fealty and homage.³⁶ As such, the Marcher lords enjoyed particular liberties, including the right to hear almost all cases in their own courts, freedom from the royal right of prerogative wardship, and exemption from fiscal and military obligations arising from feudal tenure (such as aids, scutages, and military levies) (Davies 1978, 250–51). The financial incentives of Marcher lordship can scarcely be overestimated: the exceptional right of Marcher lords to tax their lands in their own name, rather than that of the king, is ultimately, as Rees Davies (1978, 187) words it, ‘what made the Marcher lords “lords royal”’. This unusual level of autonomy was further reflected in legal practice: although still plagued by a marked indeterminacy with regard to the exact nature or geographic extent of the *Marchie*, clause 56 of the 1215 text of *Magna Carta* ratified it as a legal entity, placing it, as Max Lieberman (2010, 14) notes, ‘on a par with England and Wales’.³⁷ Little wonder, then, that the March was a region where it was often said that the king’s writ did not run.

Given their level of autonomy, it is perhaps unsurprising that the Marches frequently opposed the English Crown on numerous issues. In as early as 1075, the Revolt of the Earls saw Roger fitz William, earl of Hereford (*fl.* 1071–87), join forces with the Anglo-Saxon Waltheof (d. 31 May 1076), earl of Northumberland, and Ralph de Gaël (d. *c.* 1096), earl of East Anglia, who wished to marry Roger’s daughter against the wishes of King William. This Marcher-baronial opposition to royal authority would recur in later centuries: we have already, for instance, witnessed Geoffrey Talbot’s holding of Hereford castle against King Stephen in 1138. Over a century later, there would also be high Marcher involvement in the Second Barons’ War (1264–67). In the early fourteenth century — a period coeval with my second test case (Ludlow, 1310–50) — the Marcher lords Roger Mortimer and Humphrey de Bohun acted as leading figures in the Despenser War (1321–22), and 1326 saw Roger Mortimer spearhead the invasion of England and the overthrow of Edward II. Similarly, the period of my third case study (Cwm Tawe, 1380–1410) is marked by the revolt of Owain Glyndŵr (*c.* 1400–15), which saw unprecedented rebellions in Wales and the Marches against the kingdom of England.

³⁶ J. G. Edwards (1956) argued that Marcher claims to regal authority were inherited from the Welsh princes that they had supplanted. This thesis was revised by Rees Davies (1978, 217–22, 249–57), who argued that their independence was not constitutional, but that it stemmed primarily from their military, frontier nature, with Marcher lords gradually consolidating certain immunities from royal jurisdiction (see also Davies 1979).

³⁷ For the text of clause 56, see *Magna Carta* (Holt 1992, 466–69): ‘de tenementis Anglie secundum legem Anglie; de tenementis Wallie secundum legem Wallie; de tenementis Marchie secundum legem Marchie’ (for tenements in England according to the law of England; for tenements in Wales according to the law of Wales; for tenements in the March according to the law of the March).

This political freedom feeds into another vector of cross-cultural contact in the form of Welsh–Marcher political and military alliances. These were a frequent feature of the political landscape, with each Marcher lord and Welsh *tywysog* ‘quite ready to make and unmake his own political alliances to his best advantage’ (Suppe 1994, 16). No period makes this point clearer than the fifty years or so following 1066.³⁸ In 1067, for example, dispossessed Anglo-Saxon lords like the Herefordshire thegn Eadric the Wild and Earl Edwin of Mercia allied with the Welsh *tywysogion* Bleddyn ap Cynfyn, king of Gwynedd, and his brother Rhiwallon, king of Powys, resulting in an attack on Hereford in 1067 and on Shrewsbury in 1069 (Darby 1986, 267; Davies [1987] 2000b, 27–28). In 1072, Caradog ap Gruffudd allied with Norman forces (likely those of Roger of Breteuil) in order to defeat Maredudd ab Owain (Maund 1991, 146). Late 1084 saw Earl Hugh of Chester, Robert of Rhuddlan, Sheriff Warin of Shropshire, and Walter de Lacy ally with Gwrgan ap Seisyll and the men of Powys in order to invade the Llŷn Peninsula (Suppe 1994, 16). Similarly, uprisings in Herefordshire in 1086 (in favour of William Rufus) and 1095 (against Rufus, in favour of Stephen) saw the deployment by Marcher lords of Welsh troops (Holden 2008, 139). Kari Maund (1991, 149) also speculates that, in 1091, it was Bernard de Neufmarché who may have sponsored Gruffudd ap Maredudd in his bid for the kingdom of Deheubarth against Rhys ap Tewdwr. Finally, Robert de Bellême’s 1102 rebellion against Henry I also involved his Welsh allies (Suppe 1994, 16).

None of the above is to say that the English Crown was powerless against the Marcher lords: Marcher law continued to rely heavily on English legal practices, and the refusal of the king’s writ was often little more than, as Rees Davies (1978, 163) puts it, an ‘occasional act of bravado’.³⁹ Nonetheless, it is clear that Marcher lordship was marked by a level of judicial, territorial, and seigneurial omnicompetence that was exceptional in the medieval British Isles and, in fact, Europe (Davies 1978, 217–19). Moreover, to the extent that this thesis is concerned with (rethinking) the political relations of the ‘periphery’ to the hegemonic ‘core’, the political clout of the Marches makes them a compelling test case.

³⁸ Cross-border alliances also occurred in the pre-Norman period: take, for example, the alliance between Gruffudd ap Llywelyn and Ælfgar in 1055 and 1058, or between the same Gruffudd and Swegn Godwinsson in 1047, or earlier still between Edwin ab Einion and ‘Edylfi’ in 992. See Maund (1991, 147). For Ælfgar and Gruffudd, see *ASC* (C) 1055; *BYT* 1055; *ASC* (D) 1058.

³⁹ On English kings’ relations with the Marcher lords, see Davies (1978, 249–73).

3.B. Conceptualising the Marches

Given the difficulty of mapping these vectors of multilingual, cross-cultural exchange onto any neatly definable area, several modern critics have developed their own terminologies for designating the region. For example, in her 2017 work analysing a series of Anglo-Saxon texts and Anglo-Welsh treaties like the *Dunsæte Agreement*, Lindy Brady uses the term ‘Welsh borderlands’, which she conceptualises as a ‘singular nexus of Anglo-Welsh culture’ (12) where two peoples and languages met, interacted, and intermixed. Similarly, for the post-Norman period, Simon Meecham-Jones (2008) coins the term ‘the Welsh penumbra’ to designate a space of ‘profound cultural contact’ (32), distinct from one of military conflict, that existed between Welsh and Anglo-Norman/English cultures.

For a number of reasons, this thesis continues to deploy the terminology of the Welsh Marches: partly because it is in keeping with the medieval terminology; partly because its scope covers both ‘border’ and ‘conquest’ lordships; partly because it is itself an apt illustration of language contact;⁴⁰ and partly because, as a word still in use in the region today, it provides a strategic term to reposition locations like twelfth-century Hereford and fourteenth-century Ludlow outside of Anglocentric designations like the ‘West Midlands’. Still, it is worth specifying that my use of the term Marches is, like Brady’s ‘borderlands’ and Meecham-Jones’s ‘penumbra’, intended to designate a perceived space of cultural contact and interaction that is not necessarily coterminous with the boundaries of medieval Marcher lordships or modern nation-states.

It may seem tempting, given the linguistic, cultural, and political distinctiveness of what I am calling the ‘Welsh Marches’, to argue for the existence of a self-perceived Marcher community, or even of a distinct Marcher identity. There is, perhaps, some evidence to support such a claim. For example, the Marcher lords necessarily asserted their identity *as lords Marcher* in order to secure the immunities that accompanied that status, though the basis for that identity is legal and political, not racial, ethnic, or even purely regional. In fact, the Marcher lords were mostly great magnates whose portfolios also included land in England and, often, Ireland: their Marcher lands simply came with added benefits.⁴¹ That said, we do occasionally find assertions of a regional Marcher identity, as, for

⁴⁰ Germ *marka > OE *mearc* and OF *marche*. OF *marche* > AN *marche* > ME *march(e)*. EITHER ME *march(e)* OR AN *marche* > MW *mars, mers*. See *FEW*, *marka; *OED*, ‘march’, n. 3; *GDD*, ‘marchie’, s. f.; *GDC*, ‘marche’, s. f., 1; *DMF*, ‘marche’, n. 2; *AND*, ‘marche’, s. 1 and 2; *MED*, ‘march(e)’, n. 2; *GPC*, ‘mars, mers¹’, e. g.

⁴¹ On this, see Bates (2013), and the studies of Hagger (2001) and Veach (2014) on the de Verdun and Lacy families, respectively.

example, in Walter Map's famous description of himself as a 'Marcher to the Welsh' (ii.23, 194; *Marchio sum Walensibus*).⁴²

In this thesis, however, I do not assume that there is an ontology to the Marches for reasons both theoretical and historical; indeed, the fact that the Marches render the convergence of these two so visible is perhaps the best reason for choosing them as my thesis case study. If, as we have seen, 'society' for ANT is only ever an effect of reassembling networks of intersecting agencies, then it follows — as I noted in §2 above — that my study cannot presume a stable, continuous 'Marcher society' across a wide area and in the *longue durée*. What makes the Marches such a compelling case study is that, in their case, the historical evidence strongly corroborates this approach. As we have seen, although there may be clear reasons for conceptualising these regions as distinct (culturally, linguistically, politically, and legally) from both England and *pura Wallia*, there is little evidence of any internally monolithic, homogenous — even less, diachronic — Marcher identity. Similarly, the extent and nature of the March was itself contentious and varying over time, not least over the course of the temporal parameters of this thesis: the still emergent March of my first case-study by no means resembles the post-Edwardian Conquest March of my third, by which time 'the tripartite structure of Principality, March and English counties had become established' (Lieberman 2010, 19). Even after the period of their consolidation, the Marcher lordships were never a single, politically cohesive unit. Rather, the Marches were marked by political fragmentation and factionalism: the political allegiances and self-identifications of Marcher lords were highly mobile and strategic vis-à-vis English kings, Welsh *tywysogion*, and their fellow Marcher lords. In other words, it is difficult to argue that the Marches might constitute an ontological *entity*; it is perhaps even more difficult to suggest that they constitute a political, linguistic, or cultural *identity*.

Yet, although they are a particularly useful illustration of it, this point is perhaps not necessarily exclusive to the Marches. As we saw earlier, ANT enjoins us not to assume the presence of an ontologically stable 'big, reassuring pot of glue' (Latour 2005, 37), be that the 'Marches' or, indeed, 'England' itself. If, following the example of ANT and the Marches, we were to strip 'England' of its reified ontological status, then 'English' too might become just as labile and slippery a signifier, just as strategic, just as deictic, just as contingent on the time, place, and the political positioning of its utterance.

⁴² However, as Smith (2017) suggests, this too might be part of a broader strategy whereby Walter styled himself at the Angevin court as a go-to Welsh specialist. This possibility is further discussed in Chapter 2.

Thus, it is insufficient to subsume the border Marches under the umbrella of ‘England’ or under Anglocentric regions like the ‘West Midlands’, or, equally, to subsume the conquest Marches under Cambrocentric ones like ‘South Wales’. The first reason for this is — as §3A argued — that the judicial, political, and cultural contexts of the March were local and specific and ought not to be overwritten by the totalising descriptors of modern nation-states. The second, perhaps wider-reaching reason is that such designations succeed only in replacing one ‘pot of glue’ with other, bigger ones.

4. French Connections?

Given their production in the borderlands of England and Wales, one might reasonably expect the texts and manuscripts of the medieval Welsh Marches also to belong to the disciplinary domains of English and Welsh studies. In a sense, they do: most interest in Marcher cultural production has been shown by scholars working in English and Celtic studies departments. Yet, these regions, like much of post-1066 England, were home to considerable numbers of French-speakers and were steeped in French-language literary culture. As I argue more fully in Chapter 1, this point will be crucial to the network perspective proposed and adopted by this thesis, since their access to French-language culture is key to revising the ‘peripheral’ status of the Welsh Marches. Therefore, the remainder of this introduction will be devoted to explaining why a consideration of medieval French culture overlaps so productively with a networked methodology and how this might be usefully brought to bear on the case of the medieval Welsh Marches.

4.A. The Networks of French

Since the medieval period itself, insular French has been the subject of a centuries-long disparagement that has only recently started to be revised. Ian Short’s 2009 article ‘*Verbatim et literatim*’ admirably traces the emergence, over the course of the twelfth century, of insular French as a literary medium, evolving from an oral into a written mode to (begin to) rival Latin. He acknowledges, however, that his argument runs somewhat against the medieval grain, noting that insular French was frequently portrayed by insular speakers themselves (his examples include Walter Map and Gerald of Wales) as a primarily oral language and a barbarisation of continental forms.⁴³ There is, as Short notes, a degree of

⁴³ On insular French as an oral language, see Rothwell (1978), Legge (1979), Richter (1979), Short (1980).

snobbery to these elite men's disparagements of speakers of insular French, as well, perhaps, as the Latin-leaning bias of a clerical class.

Be that as it may, such judgements did, in part, contribute to the consensus in early scholarship that insular French was simply 'bad French' (Menger 1904, 4). But 'bad' in comparison to what? Not only does this assumption set insular French against a continental norm that never existed (Trotter 1994, 478–79), but it also once more demonstrates how doing so has resulted in a scholarship traditionally underpinned by conservative politico-spatial models: in this case, it locates a standard language at the 'core' (Île-de-France) with a derivative, 'bad' version cast onto its 'periphery' (Britain).

Thanks, however, to a considerable amount of work by French specialists (Short not least among them), the nature of medieval French as an administrative, oral, and literary language in England and elsewhere is being rethought. Notable recent research includes, of course, the wide range of works centring on the 'French of England'.⁴⁴ This work has been profoundly influential: in its mould, we might also cite the recent volume on *The French of Outremer* (Morreale and Paul 2018).⁴⁵ Similarly, much work has also been done on Franco-Italian and the presence of French in Italy,⁴⁶ and we might equally point to volumes such as 2010's *French Global* (McDonald and Suleiman 2010); 2011's *Medieval Multilingualism: The Francophone World and its Neighbours* (Kleinhenz and Busby 2011), and 2014's *European Francophonie* (Rjéoutski, Argent, and Offord 2014).

A number of research projects have been influential in the development of this field, including the UK-based projects *Medieval Francophone Literature Outside of France (MFLCOF)* (2011–2015) and the bilingual French-English *The Values of French Literature in the European Middle Ages (TVOF)* (2015–2020). These projects have resulted in important research outputs, such as Simon Gaunt's 2015 article 'French Literatures Abroad', which articulates an alternative model of French

⁴⁴ See, in particular, Wogan-Browne (2009), Wogan-Browne, Fenster, and Russell (2016), Fenster and Collette (2017). This research builds on the work of a number of earlier Anglo-Normanists cited throughout this thesis (Legge, Rothwell, Short, Trotter, etc.). However, in terms of investigating the intertwinement of English- and (insular and continental) French-language literatures, we might also point to William Calin's 1994 *The French Tradition and the Literature of Medieval England* as an early example. As a counterpoint, we might look to David Howlett's 1996 *The English Origins of Old French Literature*, which argued for the prior influence of the style and lexis of Old English literature on the twelfth-century boom in insular French literature.

⁴⁵ For a good summary of the state of research in this field, see Laura Minervini's chapter (2018, 15–29). For further key studies in Outremer French, see Aslanov (2006) and Minervini (2010; 2012; 2016a; 2016b). On French in Cyprus in particular, see Imhaus (2004) and Minervini (2005). On the literary-intellectual culture of Outremer generally, see, among others, Jacoby (1984), Minervini (2002), Zinelli (2016a), Rubin (2018).

⁴⁶ See, among many others, Zinelli (2016b), Minervini (2014), and Gaunt (2013, 15–16, 24–28, 84–94). See also the recent special edition of *Italian Studies* on the 'The Italian Angevins', especially the contributions of Gilbert, Keen, and Williams (2017), Dunbabin (2017), and Lee (2017).

literary history that is centripetal rather than centrifugal.⁴⁷ Similarly, David Murray's 2015 thesis, 'Poetry in Motion', forthcoming as a monograph in 2019, innovatively explores the 'polycentric poetic field' of Western Europe, that is, the cross-cultural, multilingual networks of dissemination of highly mobile lyric material (via contrafacta, multilingual poetics, lyric intercalation, etc.). Finally, the recently published *MFLCOF* volume brings together contributions from nineteen scholars investigating the production and circulation of French-language materials in and between various cultural contexts, with particular focus on Anglo-Germanic and Romance vectors (Morato and Schoenaers 2018). In their various ways, the aim of these projects and their outputs has been to trace, and to interpret the implications of, French as a what Gaunt (2015) calls a 'supralocal' language, and *mettre en relief* the texts produced, circulated, and consumed beyond the boundaries of 'France'.⁴⁸

Of course, the work of several other scholars might also be cited here: Sharon Kinoshita's work on medieval boundaries (2006; 2013) and on worlding medieval French literature (2007; 2010) has widely engaged with French-language texts in global contexts; E. Jane Burns' work on silk and material culture (2009) has served to underline the influence of Eurasian trade in material goods on European culture and French-language literature; and thinking about the Postcolonial Middle Ages was, in large part, what prompted medievalists' 'questioning of a range of disciplinary premises that are grounded in modern notions of nation states and national languages' (Gaunt 2011, 516).⁴⁹

Particular mention should be made, however, of Keith Busby's 2017 work *French in Medieval Ireland, Ireland in Medieval French*, which traces not only the presence of French and of French-language literary culture in Ireland, but also interprets conceptualisations of Ireland in medieval French literature. Needless to say, Busby's work is especially germane to this thesis: while much of the work cited above has productively explored French in Romance, Levantine, and Anglo-Germanic contexts, Busby's work is note- and praiseworthy as one of the few — along with William Calin's (2014) work on (primarily continental) French influence on Scots literature — to investigate French language, literature, and culture in a Celtic context.

⁴⁷ For an interesting example of earlier work on remapping literary history, see Jewers (2000), which redirects the development of the novel southwards from France through Occitania and Catalonia, rather than northwards through England, Flanders, and Germany.

⁴⁸ Gaunt coins this neologism by analogy with Alberto Varvaro's term in his exhortation for us to 'riconoscere che le identità che, del medioevo fino ad oggi, si riconoscono e definiscono attraverso lingue letterarie sono sempre sovralocali' (1996, 532; recognise that the identities that, from the Middle Ages through to today, are discernible in and defined by literary languages are always supralocal).

⁴⁹ The literature on the postcolonial Middle Ages is vast, but for a good place to start, see Cohen (2000).

The cumulative effect of these works has been to formulate an understanding of Old French as, in Sharon Kinoshita's words, 'extra-territorial *avant la lettre*' (2010, 6). This supralocal vernacular is not to be conceived of as universal *koinē*: we must allow for local differences between and within French dialects — just as we must also allow for them between forms of Latin (Rigg 1996, 76). Yet, in the place of a standard/nonstandard binary mapped onto a core-periphery, this work has formulated the alternative image of French as a mode of linguistic communication and literary composition to which, from Ireland to Outremer, various individuals and communities had access until the fifteenth century. Thus, as Simon Gaunt (2015, 58) writes: 'Even when specific instances of texts in French do not translate easily, their production and dissemination show how readers could participate in a cosmopolitan, supralocal textual culture by virtue of being able to read French'.

Part of the reason for the extra-territoriality of Old French is the precocity of insular French. Most examples of the earliest written French are, as Christine Ruby (1990) has pointed out, interlinear or marginal additions to texts in Latin, German, or Old English. Indeed, the work of Maria Careri, Christine Ruby, and Ian Short (2011, xlvii–lv) has demonstrated not only that the vast majority of early manuscripts in French are insular in origin, but also that the twelfth-century script for writing insular French (i.e. the earliest script for writing *any* kind of French) was influenced by those used for writing insular Latin and Old English. Similarly, the work of Geneviève Hasenohr has long suggested that the *scriptae* for writing French emerge principally from monasteries in the British Isles (1990, 231–43).⁵⁰ Her claim has some overlap with the comprehensive *Translations médiévales* project, which has found that a high proportion of translations into French in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries come from England (Galderisi 2011). The vast majority of these are from Latin, and their devotional or learned character also suggests religious contexts of production. Additionally, Serge Lusignan (2012, 119) has shown that, alongside Picard and central French, an insular French *scripta* was also active in Picardy and Flanders in the first half of the thirteenth century.

On the basis of this evidence, Gaunt (2015, 30) writes that 'a picture emerges of a written textual culture in French beginning in a so-called peripheral zone (...) and then moving towards the

⁵⁰ Hasenohr's argument in this article is that the *mise-en-page* of early vernacular material, gradually incorporated from gloss to text in monastic manuscripts, is ultimately calqued on those manuscripts' Latin models. She writes in particular of the *Chanson de Saint Alexis* and the *Chanson de Roland*, both products of English monastic scriptoria c. 1120–30, as typifying twelfth-century manuscripts in French. For a critique of the notion of the vernacular's linear transition from gloss to text, see O'Donnell (2017, 18). Still, the locating of these vernacular developments in insular contexts serves to underline the early significance of insular French; indeed, O'Donnell's examples are also insular.

area usually taken to be its centre'.⁵¹ What we might draw from this picture, however, is not merely a useful reversal of the core-periphery model, but an example of that model's more fundamental incapacity to account for the emergence of vernacular textual culture. Reconfiguring this centripetal model as a network (in the terms outlined in §3 above) circumvents the requirement of any 'core' out of or towards which French-language literary culture might travel. In this way, the conceptual contours of the supralocalism of Old French can be not only clarified but radicalised, and the medieval British Isles repositioned in the linguistic and literary histories of French not as an originary 'core' that degenerates into a provincial 'periphery', but as an early and enduring hub in the development of Old French language and literature.⁵² Ultimately, as Morato and Schoenaers (2018) write, referring to French in Anglo-Germanic, Romance, and Levantine contexts: '(...) polycentric dynamics and tightly interwoven networks remained for at least two to three centuries one of the main ways in which French structured itself as a literary language on a global scale' (3).

There is, to be sure, an extent to which these networks of medieval French may be understood as socially hegemonic ones, whose agents are primarily those of aristocratic, ecclesiastic, and intellectual elites.⁵³ According to Claudio Galderisi (2016), use of French — with the exception of 'la francophonie anglaise' — concerned primarily 'des cercles intellectuels cosmopolites relativement restreints' (225–26), and that once texts were intended for a wider, non-francophone audience ('noble mais aussi bourgeois'), they were composed in 'une langue hybride', like Franco-Italian (227). Even in the context of 'la francophonie anglaise', insular French is often understood as the marker of a socially hegemonic class. For instance, Susan Crane (1997) argued that, even as insular French was increasingly becoming an acquired prestige language in thirteenth-century England, it persisted 'because its dominance over English had always derived not so much from being a mother tongue as from its associations with power and culture' (105). More recently, Kimberlee Campbell (2010, 128) notes in her contribution to the *French Global* volume that by the end of the twelfth century "French" is a marker of social and political rather than geographic or linguistic identity'.

⁵¹ Gaunt rightly goes on to examine Geffrei Gaimar's *Estoire des Engleis* (composed in Lincolnshire c. 1136–37) as evidence of early insular literary developments in French (2015, 30–40). See also Legge (1965), Short (1992), and Ailes and Putter (2014, 78): 'Far from being on the fringes of cultural production, England found itself in the vanguard of innovation in French literature in a number of genres, such as romance, *chanson de geste*, and chronicle'.

⁵² As the work of David Trotter (2003b; 2003c) and Richard Ingham (2009) has shown, insular French remained in close contact with continental French forms until the late fourteenth century.

⁵³ On reasons for this, see Lusignan (1999).

However, it is becoming increasingly clear that insular French was being used by a wide variety of social classes and groups.⁵⁴ For example, the work of David Trotter on insular French as both a spoken language and a ‘language of record’ has shown it to be used ‘à des niveaux et dans des endroits assez inattendus’ (2012a, 1227), including in non-urban, non-elite contexts.⁵⁵ Similarly, work on the *French of England* (2009) has done much to diversify the contexts of insular French. For example, Richard Britnell (2009) explores the use of French by townspeople and urban authorities in England: according to Britnell, French was used in these contexts primarily as a prestige code and acquired second language, particularly in the later period of 1350–1415, at which point it is more systematically replaced by English. Drawing on eight household accounts (1298–1303) from the Augustinian convent of Campsey Ash, Marilyn Oliva (2009) uncovers the ‘multilingual environment of a female monastic population from society’s middling ranks who utilized French, Latin and English not only in their record-keeping, but also in the literary manuscripts they compiled, owned and inscribed’ (2009, 102). Maryanne Kowaleski (2009) explores the use of French by insular mariners, fishermen, shipmen, merchants, and port-town residents. Drawing on earlier work by Trotter (2003a), Kowaleski makes a convincing case for French as ‘the *lingua franca* of not only maritime law and some port-town records, but also as the basis of a common argot on the Atlantic littoral’ (2009, 114).

Whether as native or acquired language, as prestige code, language of record, or even vehicular language, French was being used in and around England in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes by socially diverse speakers until at least the fourteenth century.⁵⁶ Insular forms of French were, from the very beginnings of French vernacular development, in close and continued contact with continental ones, and ought, as Marianne Ailes and Ad Putter (2014, 70) have suggested, to be viewed as ‘an organic part of a French language continuum’. Moreover, competence in insular French enabled elite and non-elite speakers alike quite literally to navigate their way around Europe: as Rothwell stated in 1976, medieval French was ‘a currency valid in most of Western Europe’ (466). Thus, what was at stake in insular competence in French and insular involvement in French-language

⁵⁴ In as early as 1976, William Rothwell argued that thirteenth-century England saw an ‘upward surge of French as the second [to Latin] and increasingly competitive language of culture’, but which also ‘became increasingly used for all manner of cultural and administrative purposes’ (465–66).

⁵⁵ See also Trotter’s work on problematising the boundaries between insular French and other vernaculars (both continental French and English) (see, in particular, Trotter 2013). On this issue, see also Butterfield (2009, esp. 12–13).

⁵⁶ Like Galderisi, Elizabeth Dearnley (2016) has written that competence in French as a native language was only ever limited to ‘a small percentage of the population for a relatively short time after the Conquest’ (140). However, citing Butterfield (2009), she also notes the need for us to rethink both the native/acquired binary and the notion that acquired languages cannot also be living ones (141).

literary culture was not (or at least, not only or always) an elite social identity *within* the British Isles, but a position in pan-European networks in which French was the ‘valid currency’.

4.B. A ‘French of Wales’?

It follows, then, that this thesis, concerned as it is with the position of the Welsh Marches in wider global networks (and this from a literary perspective), should focus to some degree on the networks instantiated and facilitated by medieval French. To what extent did Wales and the Marches participate in these networks? What are the implications of that participation for their ‘peripheral’ status?

Since David Trotter’s groundbreaking 1994 article ‘L’anglo-français au Pays de Galles’, it has been clear that insular French was used widely in Wales. Trotter’s assertion is that: ‘N’en déplaise aux Anglais, l’anglo-français est un phénomène britannique, une langue non pas de l’Angleterre, mais des Iles Britanniques’ (481; With all due respect to the English, Anglo-French is a British phenomenon, a language not of England but of the British Isles). According to Trotter, however, the use of insular French in Wales was primarily as an *administrative* language rather than as a literary one, and he points to a number of non-literary sources to support his claim. These include private deed collections, court and assize rolls, the documents edited in the *Calendar of Ancient Correspondence Concerning Wales* (1935) and the *Calendar of Ancient Petitions Relating to Wales* (1975), and the manuscripts catalogued by E. Owen in the *Catalogue of the Manuscripts Relating to Wales in the British Museum* (1900–1922). Trotter’s article concludes with a useful list of Welsh loan words in insular French drawn from these sources (1994, 481–87).

Trotter’s sources all contain evidence of insular French being used by individuals and communities of various classes (royal, ecclesiastic, monastic, aristocratic, bourgeois, etc.) for various purposes (administrative, legal, diplomatic, etc.) and in various formats (including applications for tax exemptions, battle reports, lists of rebels, etc.).⁵⁷ They also contain ample evidence of Welsh people sending correspondence in French, either composing in French themselves or enlisting the aid of French-speaking translators. Trotter flags up in particular petitions in Merioneth, Talybolion (Anglesey), Penrhos (Anglesey), Eifionydd (Caernarvon), and Trefmeibion (Anglesey) from 1321 to 1377 as evidence of non-elite, bourgeois communities using administrative insular French in areas of

⁵⁷ See *Cal. Corr. Wales* 46, 49, 98–9, 101, 103–6, 122, 166–7, 209, 239; *Cal. Anc. Pet.* 29, 61–2, 122–3, 200, 241–5, 254, 361–2. On French as a pan-European *lingua franca* in legal writing, see Kuskowski (2014).

north and west Wales, where, unlike in the Marches, French-speaking communities were not of long standing (1994, 468).⁵⁸

Trotter's argument is both convincing and important, and he is absolutely right to critique the imbalance in Anglo-Norman studies between the status of literary and non-literary evidence — one that this thesis, admittedly, does little to redress. Sadly, despite work on French in England, Outremer, Italy, and Ireland, virtually no work has been done since 1994 to identify a 'French of Wales'. Therefore, in order to expand upon Trotter's 'enquête préliminaire', as I hope this thesis ultimately does, I would here make two points.

The first is that Trotter, it seems to me, too readily accepts that, beyond the two writers cited in the works of Legge and Vising (Hue de Rotelande and Simon de Carmarthen), there is simply 'très peu de *littérature* anglo-normande au Pays de Galles' (1994, 477, original emphasis; very little Anglo-Norman *literature* in Wales).⁵⁹ Perhaps Trotter is not wrong; but is it realistic to presume that all the French speakers in Wales simply lived in isolation from French-language literary culture? Even if very little literature in insular French survives from medieval Wales, it is possible that French literature was being consumed, circulated, and translated in those regions. At the risk of excessively foreshadowing my third test case, there is, for example, no evidence of original literary production in French in medieval Glamorgan: yet, §3 of Chapter 1 recovers a milieu steeped in a French-language literary culture. Perhaps it is through this kind of work, identifying the residues of French-language culture as a kind of presence-in-absence, that the 'French of Wales' in any literary-historical sense might be most successfully delineated.

My second point pertains to Trotter's argument that the principal reason that the French of Wales has been overlooked is due to Anglo-Norman studies' traditional focus on literary material, *and not* due to its Anglocentric biases: 'Pour une fois, l'oubli du Pays de Galles n'est pas le résultat — comme on pourrait le croire — de la négligence linguistique qui fait que le mot "Angleterre" désigne non seulement l'Angleterre elle-même, mais toute la Grande-Bretagne' (1994, 477; For once, overlooking of Wales is not the result — as one might think — of the linguistic negligence by which the word 'England' designates not only England itself, but all of Great Britain). Yet, as we have already seen, there are many medieval *Pays de Galles*: pre-Conquest *Pura Wallia*, the post-1282

⁵⁸ On French linguistic influence in Wales, see also earlier work by Watkin (1918–19) and Surridge (1966; 1981; 1984; 1985; 1988). For a discussion of orthographical evidence of French-Welsh language contact, see Rodway (2009).

⁵⁹ On these, see Dean (1999, §162, §163, §593).

Principality, the Marcher lordships, the Marches as a perceived space of cultural contact (*borderlands*, *penumbra*, etc.). None of these spaces, however, conform to the boundaries of modern-day Wales: remember that for the twelfth- and thirteenth-century London-based scribes of the exchequer, *Wallia* extended all the way up to Hereford. In other words, much of what we might group under a ‘French of Wales’ is already claimed by the ‘French of England’ given the location of many such places in modern-day England. It *is*, therefore, a kind of Anglocentrism that has overlooked the ‘French of Wales’, since it has overwritten medieval cultural geography with the shape of the post-medieval English nation state.

It would be a very different picture of French in the British Isles that would emerge were locales like twelfth-century Hereford and fourteenth-century Ludlow to be extricated from the ‘French of England’. It would, apart from anything else, force a radical rerouting of literary history. Again, at the risk of excessive foreshadowing, imagine if manuscripts and corpora as central to Middle English studies — and to arguments in favour of emergent English nationalism — as the Ludlow-based Harley 2253 were no longer assimilable to England and English literary history? Or, to take a non-literary example, the document discussed by Michael Richter (2000) relating to the canonisation trial of Thomas Cantilupe, held in Hereford in 1307. This remarkable record reveals the professions, ages, and social statuses of the 203 witnesses, as well, crucially, as the linguistic distribution of their testimonies: for the clerics, testimonies were split roughly evenly between French and Latin (without a single use of English); for the lay townsfolk, roughly evenly between French and English; while the majority of rural laymen opted for English. The high numbers of French-speakers in Hereford is, as Serge Lusignan (2009, 20) words it, ‘all the more important considering that Hereford is 150 miles away from London, on the periphery of the area in which the strongest Norman presence was felt’. But what if Hereford were not simply ‘on the periphery’ of a French-speaking English heartland? Would this document not instead mark the participation of a reasonably wide spectrum of Marcher society in a supralocal vernacular whose networks stretched from Ireland to Outremer?

What I am suggesting is, however, more than a literary-historical rerouting. There is, on the one hand, an argument to be made for the political expediency of a ‘French of Wales’. As a short-hand term, the phrase has a decentring power: it enables a marginalised region of the ‘Celtic Fringe’ to rival the ‘French of England’, and it recalibrates a number of the cultural products attributed to this latter. On the other hand, the implications of a possible ‘French of Wales’ are perhaps wider reaching. If the

so-called Welsh ‘periphery’ participates in this supralocal, polycentric culture, to what extent can we speak of ‘peripheries’ at all? Can there be a ‘French of Wales’ on the terms of the core-periphery, or does it force that very binary to fall apart? As a formulation, then, the decentring power of the ‘French of Wales’ lies not only in its ability to compete with the ‘French of England’ on its own terms, but in its capacity to alter those terms more radically.

5. Thesis Outline

This has, I realise, been a somewhat hefty introduction. It is, in small part, because it has been necessary to provide sufficient explanation for an interdisciplinary audience, both for French specialists less familiar with the Welsh Marches, and for Welsh specialists less familiar with developments in medieval French scholarship. It is, however, in greater part because it has been necessary to establish a series of threads that will be taken up in the following chapters. It is with an outline of these that I now conclude.

Chapter 1, ‘Writing Networks’, forms the backbone of the thesis: it formulates an account of the literary culture of my three locales, introduces the textual corpus of the following three chapters, and discusses their manuscript contexts, all the while tracing the transmission of texts to and from the Marches. Throughout, the chapter pays particular attention to Marcher involvement in the supralocal networks of French-language literary culture, and argues that this involvement not only disproves the ‘peripheral’ status ascribed to the Welsh Marches, but more fundamentally calls into question the legitimacy of the core-periphery model that produces such ascriptions.

In Chapter 2, ‘Reading Networks’, I turn to the texts themselves in order to formulate ‘networked readings’ of the corpus. I open with a discussion of the local/global dynamic of networks, and proceed by analysing the ways in which these texts position their local environment in relation to the global networks their narratives describe, a strategy which, I suggest, is politically resonant. I conclude by suggesting that these texts not only debunk their ‘peripheral’ status, but fundamentally counteract the core-periphery logic that peripheralises them in the first place.

Chapter 3, ‘Networks and the Nonhuman’, takes up ANT’s imperative to restore agency to the nonhuman world, as an example of how one might read with networks thematically. I begin by analysing the overlap between theories of the network, especially ANT and object-oriented ontologies, and suggest how the textual representation of nonhuman agencies in texts from the Marches might be

read politically against contemporary English accounts of the resistant Welsh landscape. I argue that the Marcher texts' underlining of nonhuman agency is politically resonant, representing a network of agencies that either co-operate with Marcher protagonists, or else exceed, outlast, and overwhelm any human hegemony, not least the contemporary insular one.

Chapter 4, 'Networks and Language', looks at language as a politically resonant networking device. It looks in particular at representations of French as a network more expansive and diverse than that of Latin, as a language whose reach exceeds the bounds of insular hegemony, and as a language whose networks can be mobilised in opposition to hegemonic power. The chapter's final section looks at conceptualisations of Welsh as a networked vernacular, and at the Welsh fantasies and anxieties to which such conceptualisations give rise.

The last chapter, 'Networks and the Arthurian March', steps away from the Marcher corpus in order to look synoptically at representations of the Welsh Marches in the genre of Arthurian literature. Based on a multilingual analysis, I contend that the Arthurian world as represented in Arthurian texts offers a decentralised, networked vision of medieval politico-cultural geography. The chapter ultimately argues that the networks of Arthurian power, located mainly in the regions of the Welsh Marches, act not only as a politically resonant reimagining of real-world political geography, but as a more fundamental revision of the core-periphery model to which it has been subjected.

Finally, I conclude the thesis with a brief examination of the Hereford *mappa mundi*, a world map at least partially created in Hereford and kept there since its completion, as an image encapsulating the investment of the so-called 'periphery' in a decentralised, networked, and truly global world.

6. Post-Script: The Fifth Source of Uncertainty

We have seen that ANT is a response to sources of uncertainty: the absence of 'society'; the interconnected nature of agency; the agency of the nonhuman; the impossibility of objective knowledge. There is, however, a fifth source of uncertainty: that of the account itself. ANT calls for us to engage with our own authorial agency, to accept that our work is a product and a part of these networks that we not only describe, but also extend. This thesis is no exception: it results from and extends my own networks, my professional and personal encounters, my own upbringing and education. I might, realistically, have never embarked upon this project were it not for my personal interest in the history of the Welsh Marches as the region where I was born and brought up. I grew up

sensitive to issues raised by living in a borderland ‘periphery’ with its associated ‘provincial’ baggage, issues such as cultural hybridity, multilingualism, the asymmetrical distribution of political power and cultural capital in modern Britain, and the fragility of its national borders and identities.⁶⁰ Indeed, I may have been even less interested in pursuing this work had such issues not been thrown into such stark relief for me as I studied for degrees in Cambridge and London as a first-generation student.

Such an autobiographical note may seem to some, if not many, an unnecessary, even frivolous departure from scholarly idiom. Yet, it is important, both ethically and intellectually, to acknowledge one’s speaking position, including my own as a white, cisgender man, as a first-gen, LGBT+ scholar from a rural, working-class background in the region whose medieval past forms my object of study. Such acknowledgements are particularly important at our present moment, whether we write under a Trump presidency in the US or in a Brexit Britain, when the medieval period is being increasingly co-opted by alt-right, white-supremacist ideologies for which, precisely, regions like the Welsh Marches — and the ‘Celtic’ worlds generally — are frequently made into the medieval poster-children.⁶¹ In short, the ‘periphery’ is rapidly becoming the pin-up for a host of insidious ideologies.

Numerous medievalists have rightly argued that a new kind of engaged scholarship is now required of medievalists in order to correct and revise this alt-right medieval fantasy and to address racist thinking and white privilege in our own field.⁶² It is in this context that I have written, and in which I position my thesis and its proposition of networks as a more ethical politico-spatial model for thinking about the medieval world. If the ‘periphery’ provides a safe haven for alt-right fantasies, then a turn to networks and their deconstruction of the periphery leaves those fantasies with nowhere to go. To use a Welsh phrase, it might *tynnu’r tir o dan eu traed*, that is, pull not just the rug, but the very *earth* from under their feet.

⁶⁰ I can do little better, in fact, than quote Raymond Williams ([1977] 2003) speaking, in an interview for Poetry Wales, of his comparable upbringing in the Black Mountains: ‘You must remember I was born on the border, and we talked about “the English” who were not us, and also “the Welsh” who were not us (...) But then I found to my surprise that many things I had thought were rather local to that border area, which was now Anglicized Wales, were really only problems that existed in much of the rest of Wales’ (87).

⁶¹ On this, see Hague, Giordano, and Sebesta (2005).

⁶² See, among others, Lomuto (2016), Kim (2017), Miyashiro (2017), Young (2017), Dockray-Miller (2017), Rambaran-Olm (2018), and Heng (2018a; 2018b, esp. 1–5, 15–54). On the events at the 2017 Leeds IMC in particular, see Chan (2017). See also the statement from the organisation *Medievalists of Colour*: <http://medievalistsofcolor.com/statements/on-race-and-medieval-studies/>. For reference, see also the publication of the crowd-sourced, open-access bibliography on race and medieval studies by Hsy and Orlemanski (2017). Finally, as a call for wider medievalist public engagement, see Utz (2015; 2017).

1. Writing Networks

The purpose of this chapter is to chart some of the wide-ranging literary networks active in the Welsh Marches from the period 1180 to 1410. I have outlined elsewhere what a historical account of such networks might look like for Hereford and its Marcher region from the eleventh through thirteenth centuries (Lampitt 2017). This chapter aims to formulate a more properly *literary*-historical investigation of March-based networks, focussing on my three case study locales. I will focus my investigation in particular on the manuscript contexts of the texts that form the core corpus of Chapters 2, 3, and 4. Several of the manuscripts discussed in this chapter have been digitised, published as full or partial facsimiles, or, in the case of the Welsh-language manuscripts, transcribed within the remit of the *Rhyddiaith Gymraeg, 1300–1425* project: I have provided hyper- and permalinks to online resources in footnotes throughout, and a list of manuscripts can also be found in the bibliography.

The specific objectives of this chapter are twofold. The first is to give a comprehensive overview both of these key manuscripts and of the scholarship concerning them in order then better to analyse the texts themselves. As such, it ought to be stressed that, while this chapter engages extensively with the work of a number of manuscript scholars working predominantly in English and Welsh disciplines and departments, I do not intend to interrogate nor radically to revise their methodologies and conclusions; on the contrary, much of their empirical work I largely accept.

That said, part of this chapter's purpose, in keeping with the wider objectives of manuscript studies, is to take the texts out of their modern editions and reinsert them into their local manuscript contexts, reframing them as mobile, material agents. Thus, this chapter marshals a large amount of scholarship in order to ask: what are the manuscript contexts of the literature of the Welsh Marches? Where and in which local contexts do they circulate and travel? In so doing, what networks do they trace and instantiate?

The second, related aim of this chapter is to tease out of the answers to those questions certain political implications. In particular, I suggest that the literary networks to which these supposedly 'peripheral' locations were connected might more fundamentally call into question the legitimacy of literary-historical models calqued on the core-periphery. As indicated in the Introduction, one of the ways in which I aim to do so is to draw out the importance of French-language culture in each of these

case studies. The Marches were generally, as the Introduction also explained, highly multilingual regions, and I will not be focussing on French at the expense of other vernaculars or of Latin. Yet, given the supralocalism of medieval French, participation in French-language literary culture — via consumption, production, reproduction, adaptation, etc. — provides an entry point into wider insular and continental textual networks. Therefore, French is not only a good litmus test for these regions' connectedness, but is also a useful tool for critiquing the viability of the core-periphery as a literary-historical model in the first place. This chapter also asks, therefore: to what extent do these regions participate in *French-language* literary networks? What are the implications of that participation for traditional, core-periphery models of literary history?

By proceeding in this way, this chapter will form a solid basis for those that follow, not only by introducing the textual corpus in its manuscript contexts, but also by demonstrating how the networks that we will see dramatised *in* the texts are already operative at the level *of* the texts and of the manuscripts in which they travel.

1.1. *A Credehulle a ma meisun*: Hereford, c. 1180–c. 1210

It has long been noted that late twelfth-century Herefordshire was a vibrant centre of scholarly, intellectual activity, focussed in particular on the cathedral as an important centre for the insular reception of Arabic learning.¹ Yet, a case might also be made for also seeing Hereford Cathedral as providing an important site of *literary* activity.

For example, one Herefordian corpus is provided by the works of Simon de Fresne (fl. 1190–1200), a canon at Hereford. He identifies himself in an acrostic as the author of the insular French *Vie de Saint Georges* (c. 1195–1200), which was probably commissioned by William de Vere after his return from the Holy Land and intended as propaganda for the Third Crusade (Barrow 2000). Simon was also the composer of a text known as the *Roman de Fortune* (c. 1190–1200), an adaptation-translation of Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*.

Hereford was also an important centre for prominent twelfth-century figures like Gerald of Wales. Although he was never a canon at Hereford, Gerald was in correspondence with Hereford

¹ On Hereford Cathedral as cultural and intellectual centre, see Russell (1932), Burnett (1995), Orme (2000), Pullin (2016), Firman (2016), Lampitt (2017). On the influence of Bishop Robert the Lotharingian in particular, see Barrow (1995; 2000). On the prominence of Jewish activity and culture in Hereford, see Hillaby (1984; 1985), Carpenter (2003, 490).

canons like Simon de Fresne, and even found himself at the centre of a local literary dispute. Abbot Adam, the first abbot of the Cistercian Dore Abbey, engaged Gerald in a fierce debate in 1216 with his (now lost) poem *Contra Speculum Giraldis*, a critique of Gerald's *Speculum Ecclesiae* (1216). Although no record survives of any response from Gerald, Simon de Fresne intervened, defending Gerald with the epigram, *Pro Giraldo adversus Adamum*.

Other texts are also connectable to Herefordshire's wider region. Although it is not certain that he was composing there, one Adam de Ross (now generally considered to be Ross-on-Wye) is attributed with the composition of the late twelfth-century *Vision de Saint Paul*, an insular French version of the apocryphal *Visio Pauli*.² Similarly, to Hereford's northwest, Wigmore Abbey houses the composition of the so-called *Anglo-Norman Chronicle(s) of Wigmore Abbey*, which recount(s) the founding of the Augustinian Abbey of St James in the town in the twelfth century and the Abbey's history until the mid-thirteenth century.³

The region of Wigmore is also significant to literary history as an important site for anchoritic culture: Eric Dobson (1976) famously argued in 1976 that the author of the early thirteenth-century anchorite rule *Ancrene Wisse* was the canon of Wigmore Abbey, Brian of Lingen. This hypothesis has since been revised, notably by Bella Millett (1992), though several points remain clear. Firstly, the text's so-called AB language is local to northwest Herefordshire or southwest Shropshire (Tolkien 1929, 104–26; Millett 1992, 223–24, n. 15). Secondly, an *ex libris* inscription at the foot of its first recto folio states that the tradition's base manuscript (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 402) was given to St. James' in Wigmore at the end of the thirteenth century.⁴ Thirdly, the readings of literary critics have convincingly argued that the text demonstrates an intimate link between anchoritism and the culture and psychogeography of the Welsh March (Cannon 2004, 139–71; McAvoy 2011, 147–77). It is, therefore, fair to say that *Ancrene Wisse* marks out the Welsh March, and perhaps the Wigmore

² Josiah C. Russell (1936, 9–10) first identified the poet with an Irish monk at the Cistercian Abbey of Dunbrody in Leinster, active in 1279, though this date is too late given the poem's dating to the late twelfth century. M. Dominica Legge (1950, 53–54; 1963, 274–75, 304), mentions the poem's supposed Irish connection, though admits the lack of any proof. Ross-on-Wye is now the favoured location. On this text, see also Owen (1971, esp. 51) and Short (1988). For an edition of the text, see Kastner (1906).

³ Wigmore's motherhouse was the Abbey of Saint Victor in Paris, a considerable centre of monastic learning under the theologian Hugh of Saint Victor. In 1148, Saint Victor provided Wigmore with its first abbot, Andrew of Saint Victor, referred to in the Chronicle as 'mestre de divinité' (430). On Andrew, see van Liere (1995). For an edition of the chronicle(s), see Dickinson and Ricketts (1967–69). On the various editions of the *Chronicle(s)*, see Mortimer (2015) and Given-Wilson (2003).

⁴ For an edition of *Ancrene Wisse*, see References (*Ancrene Wisse*): Millett (2006). For a description and full manuscript digitisation, see DMS: http://dms.stanford.edu/catalog/CCC402_keywords. See also MLGB3: <http://mlgb3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/mlgb/book/5689/>.

region in particular, as an important locus for anchorite culture, and thus as an important centre in a network of religious institutions across Britain and Europe involved in the spread of anchoritism.⁵

In sum, late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century Herefordshire was a region marked by significant literary activity and innovation, where French was being used in the shire for a variety of purposes, in a number of genres, and in a highly multilingual environment. It is within this context that two of late twelfth-century Herefordshire's most notable literary composers were working and ought now to be viewed. They are Hue de Rotelande and Walter Map.

Little is known about Hue de Rotelande himself, though certain references in his works enable us to reconstruct aspects of his life. He names himself several times over the course of *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus*, his two verse romances in insular French. As A. J. Holden (the most recent editor of Hue's texts) notes, it is generally accepted that *Rotelande* refers to Rhuddlan. Possibly first settled as an Anglo-Saxon *burh*, Rhuddlan became the site of a Welsh *cantref* and the location of the court of Gruffudd ap Llywelyn, king of Gwynedd (1039–55) then of Wales (1055–63). After 1066, Rhuddlan became one of the early gains of the invading Normans, who built Rhuddlan Castle in 1073. The castle was taken by the Welsh between 1149 and 1157, and taken again in 1167. Holden (1979, 8; 1991–93, i, 2) suggests that we place Hue's association with the town towards the end of the first period of Norman occupation (i.e. between 1073 and 1149). Holden notes, however, that it is impossible to know what exactly was Hue's relationship with Rhuddlan, whether he grew up there or whether it was simply the place of his birth.

Ipomedon and *Protheselaus* are full of references to their local environment, and these will be studied in closer detail in Chapter 2. For now, let us note that certain references serve to localise and date the texts' composition fairly securely. Hue had clearly travelled southwards from Rhuddlan by the time he had begun composing romance. In *Ipomedon*, he writes: 'A Credehulle a ma meisun' (l. 10571), identifiable as Credenhill to the northwest of Hereford. Similarly, in *Protheselaus* Hue names his patron as Gilbert fitz Baderon, the fourth lord of Monmouth, a man of Breton descent, whose death in 1191 provides the *terminus ante quem* for the composition of this poem and its prequel. A *terminus post quem* for *Ipomedon* is provided by a reference on line 5351 to the siege of Rouen, which occurred in 1174, when the Young King rebelled against his father by joining with Philip Count of Flanders and King Louis VII of France. As Holden (1979, 7) notes, the event is referred to in such a way as to

⁵ On the importance of texts like *Ancrene Wisse* as evidence of continued English-language textual production in the post-Conquest period, see Treharne (2012).

suggest that the event remained in living, though perhaps not especially recent, memory. Firmer dating depends on other factors: for example, critics who see in Hue's works the influence of Chrétien (see below) prefer a slightly later dating, though the 1180s seem the safest date range.

Ipomedon and *Protheselaus* are octosyllabic, insular French verse romances set in the world of the antique Mediterranean, with a cast of characters whose names betray the influence of the *Roman de Thèbes* (c. 1150–55) and other *romans d'antiquité*. *Ipomedon* recounts the exploits of the eponymous knight who falls in love with the Calabrian princess La Fièrre, whom the disguised Ipomedon serves as cupbearer, before accomplishing many exploits abroad. He returns to win La Fièrre's hand in a three-day tourney, which he attends in a different disguise each day. He goes on to defeat three monsters, before revealing his identity and marrying his beloved.⁶ *Protheselaus* is the sequel to *Ipomedon*. It recounts the exploits of Ipomedon's eponymous son, who, having been disinherited by his brother Daunus, falls in love with Queen Medea of Crete, whom he mistakenly believes disdains him for having lost his lands. Rejecting her advances, he leaves to regain his lands and prove his prowess abroad in a series of adventures. He is, however, imprisoned by the Pucele de l'Isle, who is deeply in love with him. He is eventually rescued by Medea and other allies, who also help him regain his inheritance from Daunus, and the romance concludes with his marriage to Medea.⁷ Whereas *Ipomedon* is famed for its style (variously termed comic, ironic, parodic, burlesque, and likened to the *fabliaux*),⁸ *Protheselaus* has been roundly lambasted by critics, with the exception of Judith Weiss and R. M. Spensley, for the best part of a century.⁹

Ipomedon appears to have been enjoyed a reasonable level of predominantly insular reception. It exists almost in full in two insular manuscripts: London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian A VII (fols 39ra–106rb), a mid-thirteenth-century manuscript;¹⁰ and London, British Library, Egerton 2515

⁶ For a fuller plot summary, see Lampitt (2018).

⁷ For a fuller plot summary, see Spensley (1972), who offers a running analysis of the text, and Weiss (1983, 104–5).

⁸ See, for example, Paris (1907, 123) Lecoy (1955, 477), Legge (1963, 83), Crane (1986, 158–74), Calin (1988, 111–24), Gravidal (1989, 121–30), Gaunt (2000, 54–55), Busby (1995, 878).

⁹ In 1907, Gaston Paris described *Ipomedon* as 'infiniment supérieur' (123) to its sequel; in 1955, Félix Lecoy called it 'médiocre mais curieux' (477); and in 1963 M. D. Legge claimed that while it is a truly literary, artistic creation, *Protheselaus* was written merely 'to earn bread and butter' (83). A few critics have since defended the work (Spensley 1972; Weiss 1983), though in 1991–93 the text's editor still described it as: 'a disappointing sequel to *Ipomedon*, of which it often gives the impression of being a watered-down version (...) There remains little of Hue's irreverent, tongue-in-cheek attitude' (Holden 1991–93, i, 4).

¹⁰ Cotton Vespasian A VII has no BL detailed record, no *MLGB3* record, and has not been digitised. It is described minimally on the BL and *ARLIMA* websites, see:

https://www.arlima.net/mss/united_kingdom/london/british_library/cotton/vespasianus_a_vii.html;

http://searcharchives.bl.uk/IAMS_VU2:IAMS040-001103163. Cotton Vespasian A VII is the oldest witness, and has served as the base manuscript for the editions of both Kölbing and Holden. However, as Adolfo Mussafia (1890) pointed out, the *Ipomedon* text in Vespasian A VII is divided into two sections (designated by Mussafia as

(fols 3ra–70va), an early fourteenth-century manuscript.¹¹ *Ipomedon* is also preserved in three fragments: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson D. 913 (fols 91ra–vb); Dublin, Trinity College Library, 523 (E I 39) (fols 3ra–30vb); and the fragment belonging to Charles H. Livingston (see below). *Ipomedon* was later reworked into three independent versions in Middle English: *Ipomadon* is a tail-rhymed romance from the 1390s; *The Lyfe of Ipomydon* is a verse romance in octosyllabic couplets from the second half of the fifteenth century; and *Ipomedon C* is a fifteenth-century prose work. Meanwhile, *Protheselaus* is preserved alongside its prequel in Egerton 2515, and in large part in the thirteenth-century manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Français, 2169, where it is the only text in the manuscript but is incomplete at the end.¹² Otherwise, only one other single-folio fragment exists alongside an *Ipomedon* fragment in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson, D. 913, a manuscript described by John C. Hirsch (2014, 106) as a ‘random collection of otherwise loose leaves, unconnected gatherings, bifolia and fragments’.¹³ The *Protheselaus* fragment is found at f. 90ra–vb, followed by an *Ipomedon* fragment at f. 91ra–vb. There are no later versions of *Protheselaus* in other vernaculars.

The manuscript evidence does suggest that these were texts that travelled. Charles Livingston’s mid-fourteenth-century fragments of *Ipomedon* suggest a continental *remaniement* of the insular French text in a dialect ‘very close to that of Central French’ (Livingston 1942, 118–19). Similarly, the independent insular reworkings of *Ipomedon* show the text’s wide dispersal across England. Based on linguistic evidence, Rhiannon Purdie (2001, xxxviii–xlvii) speculates that, although now preserved only in a manuscript of London provenance (Manchester, Chetham’s Library, A 6 31 [olim Chetham 8006]), *Ipomadon* was most probably composed in the West Riding of Yorkshire; it may have been copied in other southern and western regions before reaching the Chetham scribe. Tadahiro Ikegami (1983) also locates the composition of *The Lyfe of Ipomydon* to the northeast Midlands. Egerton 2515 contains further evidence of the reception of *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus*: the scribe in whose hand the whole manuscript is copied identifies himself in *Ipomedon*’s colophon as

X and A, by Holden as A1 and A2) by a lacuna of 302 lines between lines 1142 and 1444. The two sections are copied in the same hand. Mussafia’s suggestion, followed by Holden (1979, 19), is that the Cotton text is derived from two sources: the scribe was forced to resort to an inferior manuscript fragment for the first 1142 lines that were missing from the beginning of his primary, superior manuscript, though had no source for the intervening 302 lines. I see little reason to dispute this hypothesis.

¹¹ See BL detailed record: <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=7640>. The manuscript has not been digitised and has no *MLGB3* record.

¹² See the BnF record: <http://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc487208>. Digitisation available at *Gallica*: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b90589468>

¹³ Rawlinson D. 913 has no detailed record, and has not been digitised. *MLGB3* only has an entry for the *Gui de Warewic* on fols 83–89: <http://mlgb3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/mlgb/book/1650/>.

‘John of Dorkingge’, a location identifiable as Dorking in Surrey. There are records of an official with this name in London from 1300–1306,¹⁴ which is a plausible period for the manuscript’s composition.¹⁵ Travelling to France and London, the transmission of Hue’s texts traces a centripetal trajectory that not only runs counter to dominant centrifugal models, but prompts us to call into question more fundamentally the validity of the core-periphery itself. The transmission of Hue’s texts allow for partial glimpses of networks of textual transmission that cut across such a model, with texts travelling multidirectionally from the Welsh Border across England and the continent.

Additional — though somewhat less traceable — literary networks can be glimpsed in the constellation of sources discernible in *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus*. These networks of transmission are understandably wide-ranging and include classical Latin narratives (especially Virgil’s *Aeneid* and Statius’ *Thebaid*), filtered through the *matière de Rome* (*Énéas*, *Thèbes*). In *Ipomedon*, Hue seems openly to claim the *Roman de Thèbes* as a source: ‘De ceste estorie, ke ai ci faite, / Est cele de Tebes estraite’ (ll. 10541–42; This story, which I have told here, is taken from that of Thebes). Holden (1979, 50–52; 1991, i, 7–9) also points to the various versions of the *Tristan* legend as a probable influence on *Ipomedon*, particularly the *Folie Tristan* episode with the hero’s disguise as a madman at court. The influence of Chrétien de Troyes on *Ipomedon* has been somewhat a bone of contention. In his 1889 edition, Kölbing was the first to argue for understanding *Ipomedon* as an *Artusroman*: noting ‘den inneren einfluss [sic] von Crestien’s Chevalier de la charrette’ (vi; the inner influence of Chrétien’s *Chevalier de la Charrette*), he also suggested that Hue must have been familiar with the *Chevalier au lion*. Lucy M. Gay (1917, 472) disagreed, arguing *Ipomedon* to be distinctly ‘English’ in flavour, and that it should be situated more firmly in the tradition of the *roman d’antiquité*. More recently, William Calin (1988, 112) has argued that the work follows in the wake of Chrétien de Troyes as both imitation and parody. Similarly, A. J. Holden argues (1979, 51–52) that *Ipomedon* should be understood as both a romance and a parody of a romance, though noting that, in the 1180s, familiarity with Arthurian conventions does not necessarily indicate direct influence of Chrétien. What is significant, however, is that, if Chrétien’s influence can be detected in Hue’s works — and there is clearly a case for arguing

¹⁴ See *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London*, 1300 (fols xlvi/xlviii), 1302 (fol. lxix), and 1306 (fol. cxlix): <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-letter-books/volc>.

¹⁵ Egerton 2515 is dated by JONAS to the beginning of the fourteenth century, by the *Lancelot-Graal Project* to c. 1300, and by *Arthurian Fiction in Medieval Europe* to 1300–25. See JONAS:

<http://jonas.irht.cnrs.fr/manuscrit/30582>; Stones (2007, rev. 2016) <http://www.lancelot-project.pitt.edu/LG-web/Arthur-LG-ChronGeog.html>; *Arthurian Fiction in Medieval Europe* https://service.arthurianfiction.org/static/index.html#current=manuscripts&view=0&view_data=MAN0000000440

that it can — then *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus* represent very early examples of Chrétien reception. For example, *Yvain* and the *Charrette* mentioned above were, it is now thought, composed alongside one another between c. 1178 and 1181. If Hue's works were composed in the 1180s, then this Marcher reception of the Champenois Chrétien can be placed to within a decade. Even if we discard Chrétien as an Arthurian influence, other candidates — such as Geoffrey of Monmouth (Oxford, c. 1136–38), Gaimar (Lincolnshire, c. 1136–40), or Wace (c. 1155) — still point to up-to-date networks of textual circulation to which the Herefordshire March must have been connected.

It is an allusion in *Ipomedon* that allows us to segue into the final primary source for this test-case locale: 'Sul ne sai pas de mentir l'art, | Walter Map reset ben sa part' (ll. 7185–86; I am not alone in knowing the art of lying; Walter Maps knows his fair share).¹⁶ Considerably more is known about the life and career of this Walter Map than of Hue, who was clearly acquainted with this prominent figure. Walter belonged to a new cosmopolitan class of secular clerical Latin writers, described by critics like Bate (1991, 3–21), Clanchy (1993, 215), and Echard (1998, 14–24) as the composers of 'new Latin' Angevin court literature. After a possible schooling at Gloucester Abbey, Walter studied in Paris from c. 1154–60. In the 1160s he is recorded as in the service of Gilbert Foliot (bishop of Hereford [1148–63], then of London [1163–87]). By the early 1170s Map was in the service of Henry II. He accompanied the king to Limoges in 1173, represented him at the Third Lateran Council in Rome in 1179, and was at Saumur when the Young King died in 1183. Over his career, he had been canon (1183–85), chancellor (by 1186), and precentor (c. 1189) of Lincoln, parson of Westbury (Gloucestershire), archdeacon of Oxford (from 1196/97), and had been a candidate for the bishoprics of Hereford (1199) and St. David's (1203). He died on 1 April 1209 or 1210.¹⁷

Walter Map is an eminently useful figure for the argument of this chapter — and, indeed, of this thesis. He embodies the well-travelled, cosmopolitan man of the twelfth century, a 'member of the French-speaking English elite', who was equally 'at home in the international world of Latin Christendom' (Smith 2017, 20). Yet, he also remains vocal about claiming his Welsh heritage and Marcher origins, stating famously in his major work, *De nugis curialium*: 'marchio sum Walensibus' (ii.23, 194; I am a Marcher to the Welsh).¹⁸ Map was most likely a Herefordshire native: he refers to a

¹⁶ See Cartlidge (2011) on the connections between Hue and Walter (5–6) and on the implications of the allusion to lying (7–16).

¹⁷ For a fuller account of the biography of Walter Map, see Smith (2017, 13–15).

¹⁸ Much has been made of this handy sound bite: Smith (2017, 18) convincingly suggests that it is a strategic assertion of identity, part of Walter's styling himself as a Welsh specialist at the Henrician court. I think this is

number of southern border locations, sometimes showing fairly detailed local knowledge, and a number of narratives are set in southern Marcher locations.¹⁹ It is also possible that his surname/nickname *Map* (< *mab*?) indicates Welsh heritage or associations.²⁰ It is unclear from where, exactly, Walter originated: there is a known succession of Walter Maps at Wormsley between 1150 and 1240 to which he may have belonged or been related. The only relative that can be identified with any certainty is his nephew, Phillip Map, a canon of Hereford Cathedral, and chaplain to Giles de Briouze, bishop of Hereford (1200–15), chosen for the bishopric above Map by the newly crowned King John. In later life, Walter held land at Ullingswick, to Hereford's northeast,²¹ though Smith (2017, 16) speculates that Archenfield could be Walter's original home, as a markedly Welsh region of Herefordshire densely populated with Welsh people. This suggestion fits with Smith's overarching argument that Walter was a non-Cambrophone Marcher invested in Welsh culture, which he used to his advantage at court as a kind of self-styled Welsh specialist.

Walter was, from the Middle Ages until fairly recently, mistakenly believed to be the author of the *Queste del saint graal* and the *Mort le roi Artu*, which in certain manuscripts claim him as their author. A number of works have been attributed to Walter.²² By far the most popular in the period is the *Dissuasio Valerii*, an anti-matrimonial tract in circulation from c. 1184 that would later become one of the main sources for Jankyn's 'book of wikked wyves' alluded to by Chaucer's Wife of Bath. The textual tradition of the *Dissuasio* is considered bifid: the alpha version is a faux-classical text that circulated widely in Britain and on the continent under a pseudonym; it is only in the smaller, later beta

plausible, but disagree with Smith's own collapsing of Walter's identity into predominant Englishness: 'In Walter's case, the scale of English-Welsh identity is tipped toward the English side' (Smith 2017, 16). Smith goes on to cite Walter's reference to England as the mother of his young relative and himself (iv.1, 278; *matrem nostram et suam*). Yet, as argued in the Introduction, Marcher identifications with Wales and England are not mutually exclusive; they are unstable, strategic, and cannot be read as representative of the speaker's 'nationality' in the *longue durée*. Indeed, like his assertion of a Marcher identity above, his 'matrem nostram' might also serve a strategic purpose, with the first person plural pronoun (*nostram*) intended to forge a kind of connection between narrator and reader/auditor. Thus, Smith's argument here risks reproducing the English co-optation of non-English insular identities that took place in the medieval period itself. It is a phenomenon to which Walter's own text bears witness: one of the incorporated glosses in Bodley 851 identified by Smith (2017, 175) is attached to Walter's reference to 'insulam nostram' (i.17, 166; our island) and reads 'id est Angliam' (i.17, 166; that is England). The Marcher text is, here, quite literally overwritten by the kind of Anglocentrism propounded by historiographers like Henry of Huntingdon (*nunc autem Anglia*) in the work of glossators and scribes working in England.

¹⁹ References include to the Black Mountains, Ross-on-Wye, Wollaston, Beachley, Aust Cliff, the Forest of Dean, Hay-on-Wye, and Lydbury North (Smith 2017, 16).

²⁰ For a good discussion of this, see Smith (2017, 13–15).

²¹ *Gloucester Cart. S. Patri*, ii, 156.

²² A number of poems in Bodley 851 have been attributed to Walter: *Convocacio sacerdotum* (fols 75a–76rb); *De coniuge non ducenda* (fols 80va–81va); *Debate Between Heart and Eye* (fol. 81va), and the *Apocalypsis Goliae* (fols 118va–120vb). See Smith (2017, 192, n. 11).

tradition that Walter asserts his authorship and drops the pretence of being a classical author (i.e. once the text had become popular).²³

The second of Walter's texts — the one with which this thesis most closely engages — is the *De nugis curialium* (Of Courtiers' Trifles). Composed mainly in the early 1180s, *De nugis* consists of various passages arranged into five *distinctiones* (on this structure see Ch 2, §1). The passages of *De nugis* range widely in genre and form, from romance-like episodes, to political tirades, to hagiography, to ethnographic accounts, and vary significantly in length.

De nugis is preserved in a unique manuscript: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 851, a manuscript that dates to c. 1375–1400.²⁴ The manuscript has been of particular interest to scholars of Middle English, because it forms the basis of the so-called Z-text of *Piers Plowman* (c. 1370–90). The textual history of *De nugis* is long and complex: it has been most recently discussed by Smith (2017, 37–42), who formulates the most up-to-date and convincing account of the conception, composition, and transmission of the text (42–82). I follow Smith's work on several points; however, for my purposes here, a brief discussion is in order not of *De nugis*' textual history, but of its textual geography.

It is safe to say that *De nugis* was not composed in Herefordshire.²⁵ Walter writes that: 'Hunc in curia regis Henrici libellum raptim annotaui scedulis' (iv.2, 282; I have hurriedly noted down this little book in pages of parchment in the court of King Henry). Of course, the Henrician court is itself itinerant, a point that Walter himself satirises in his famous prologue likening the court to Hell: 'temporalis quidem est, mutabilis et uaria, localis et erratica, nunquam in eodem statu permanens (...) ut sola sit mobilitate stabilis' (i.1, 2; It [the *curia*/court] is temporal, changeable and various, local and wandering, never remaining in one state [...] that [the court] is stable only in its mobility.) If composed at court, *De nugis* could have been written in parts in a variety of locations. The narratives also vary widely in origin, source, and setting; I discuss the effect of this point more extensively in Chapter 2, but it is worth noting here that Walter might have composed snippets of the work during some of the many travels described above, or at least have conceived of certain passages after encountering narratives abroad.

²³ For further details, see Hanna (2017).

²⁴ Bodley 851 has no online record and has not been digitised. For a facsimile of the Bodley 851's *Piers Plowman*, see Brewer and Rigg (1994). See entry at *MLGB3*: <http://mlgb3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/mlgb/book/4487/>.

²⁵ It may be protested at this point that *De nugis* cannot, therefore, belong to any 'matter of the March'. Yet, given Walter's Marcher connections and origins, and given that a number of the narratives derive from or discuss Welsh and Marcher culture, I suggest that Walter Map and the *De nugis* remain indispensable to any discussion of Welsh border literature in this period.

Eventually, *De nugis* made its way with Walter to Oxford, probably in 1197, where, according to A. G. Rigg (1985, 182), ‘the whole pile of material (...) lay until a fourteenth-century editor copied it all out’. Indeed, in their 1994 facsimile of the Bodley *Piers*, Rigg and Brewer located production of Bodley 851 at Oxford, and suggested that the Bodley *De nugis* derives from an authorial exemplum present in Oxford from when Map was archdeacon (31). However, as Smith (2017, 73) has forcefully argued, the scribes of Bodley 851 were not working from an authorial exemplum. According to Smith, Bodley 851 is a copy of a copy of Walter’s work, and the textual transmission of *De nugis* involved at least four readers (or sets of readers): an initial glossator/annotator of the authorial exemplum; a scribe who incorporated several of the glosses into the text and promoted some to chapter headings (Copy 1); the scribes of Bodley 851 (Copy 2); and the later reader/glossator of Bodley 851.

Where, then, did this scribal activity take place? Bodley 851 contains an *ex libris* inscription stating that ‘Iste liber constat ffratri Iohanni de Wellis monacho Rameseye’ (f. 6v; Brother John of Wells, monk of Ramsey), a Benedictine monk of Ramsey Abbey in Huntingdonshire, who died in 1388.²⁶ In other words, at some point *De nugis* (either the authorial exemplum or, more likely, its copy) made its way to Huntingdonshire, where Bodley 851 was not only present, but probably produced; indeed, Ralph Hanna (1996a, 196) has argued that Bodley 851 ‘does not reflect a single act of production but a series of separate assays’ that, for the *Piers* text at least, took place not in Oxford, but in or around Ramsey Abbey itself (1996a, 200). Could it be, then, that the texts of Bodley 851 were recorded together due to their western connections? After all, certain aspects of *Piers* suggest that the author, William Langland, about whom very little is known, may have been a native of Malvern, near the Herefordshire–Worcestershire border.²⁷

Even this brief overview of Hue’s and Walter’s works has, I hope, shown how manuscripts like Cotton Vespasian A VII, Egerton 2512, and Bodley 851 offer valuable insight into the textual networks in which Marcher cultural products were implicated. Between them, they offer glimpses of networks of transmission that extend considerably through time and space, transmitting material from and about the twelfth-century Herefordian March to locales as diverse as fourteenth-century West

²⁶ John of Wells was also a cosmopolitan man: educated at Oxford, he was a staunch opponent to Wycliffe, and was sent to plead with the Pope in 1387 on behalf of the imprisoned cardinal of Norwich (see von Nolcken 2008).

²⁷ The opening setting of *Piers* is the Malvern Hills; its dialect has been located to southwest Worcestershire; and several images within the text have been considered as referring to local iconography. On local iconography, see Kaske (1968; 1988). *LALME* situates Bodley 851’s Z text in Worcestershire (LP 7700), see: http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/elalme/elalme_frames.html. See also *Late Medieval English Scribes*: <https://www.medievalscribes.com/index.php?navtype=authors&navauthor=Langland&browse=manuscripts&id=508&nav=off>.

Yorkshire, thirteenth-century London, fourteenth-century Huntingdonshire, the fifteenth-century Northeast Midlands, and mid-fourteenth-century France.

1.2. *Dynan, qe or est appellee Ludelawe*: Ludlow, c. 1310–c. 1150

Medieval Shropshire has long been known to scholarship as an important centre for manuscript production, particularly due to the Savigniac then Cistercian abbey at Buildwas, founded in 1135. The Buildwas books have been identified as the largest group of books to survive from an insular Cistercian house: the current total is 54, with 15 identified by Jennifer Sheppard as produced in the abbey itself.²⁸ The literary scene of early fourteenth-century Shropshire is dominated, however, not by any monastery, cathedral, or even scriptorium, but by the largely independent activities of a single scribe-compiler known as the Harley or Ludlow scribe.²⁹ In ground-breaking palaeographic work, Carter Revard (2000) has identified the Ludlow scribe's hand in forty-one legal documents (mostly quitclaims and grants). All bar one of them pertain to locations within a three-mile radius of Ludlow. They date from 18 December 1314 to 13 April 1349, and centre in particular on the area of Richard's Castle.³⁰ The scribe's hand is also identifiable in three trilingual compilations, likely all compiled by the Ludlow scribe himself, and whose constituent booklets Revard has dated by cross-referencing examples of his hand with the dated writs. Let us briefly take these in order, noting texts that will be of particular importance in the following chapters.

The earliest manuscript associated with the Ludlow scribe is London, British Library, Harley MS 273.³¹ This manuscript is a compilation of religious and secular texts, in which our scribe's hand has been dated by Revard (2000, 58) to c. 1314–15. Notable texts include: a section of Richard de Fournival's *Bestiaire d'amour* (fols 70r–81r), the majority of the *Purgatoire Saint Patrice* (fols 191v–

²⁸ See Sheppard (1990; 1997, xlix–l). See also *MLGB3* record for Buildwas Abbey: [http://mlgb3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/mlgb/?search_term=Buildwas, Shropshire, Savigniac and \(1147\) Cistercian abbey of St Mary the Virgin and St Chad&field_to_search=medieval_library&page_size=500](http://mlgb3.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/mlgb/?search_term=Buildwas,Shropshire,Savigniacand(1147)CistercianabbeyofStMarytheVirginandStChad&field_to_search=medieval_library&page_size=500).

²⁹ Although this anonymous scribe is generally referred to as the 'Harley Scribe', I continue to refer to him as the Ludlow scribe. His current appellation derives from his work in manuscripts now belonging to the Harley collection of the BL. However, the Ludlow scribe is not, as we will see, the only scribe of any of the Harley manuscripts associated with him, and it is, in any case, his position as a scribe active in Ludlow that primarily interests me here.

³⁰ See Revard (2000) for holographs (33–56), summaries of all of the Ludlow scribe's deeds (91–100), an index of names mentioned in them (101–7), and a table of criterial changes for dating the scribe's hand (59).

³¹ *BLDM*: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Harley_MS_273; BL Detailed Record: <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=7335>.

197v), and the *Manuel des pechés* (fols 113r–190v). The manuscript's contents are primarily insular French, with a few short Latin texts. English appears only in a single charm.

The second manuscript to contain the scribe's work is London, British Library, Royal MS 12 C XII.³² This manuscript is another compilation of prose and verse texts that were acquired, copied, and compiled at different times between c. 1316 and c. 1340, with the manuscript being added to over a number of years (Revard 2000, 58; Ker 1965, xxi; Hathaway et al. 1975, xlii–liii). Contents are mainly divided between Latin and insular French; English items are limited to the *Short Metrical Chronicle* (fols 62r–68v), some macaronic verses, some glosses, and a charm.

For the purposes of this thesis, one of the most significant items in Royal 12 C XII is *Fouke le Fitz Waryn* (fols 33–60v). Beginning in 'Dyan, qe or est appellee Ludelawe' (4, l. 11; Dyan, which is now called Ludlow), *Fouke* is an insular French prose romance concerning the Fitzwarin dynasty of Whittington in the Shropshire March.³³ The narrative opens by relating the exploits of Fulk II Fitzwarin, before turning to the life of his son Fulk III (Fouke) and his outlawry: Fouke rebels against King John when the king disinherits him of his territories in the Marches out of resentment harboured since a childhood fight during a game of chess (22–23).

Fouke has been dated by Ralph Hanna (2011, 355) to the 1320s, and is preserved solely in its original form in Royal 12 C XII. The text of *Fouke* is a prose *remaniement* of a now lost verse romance that had probably also been composed by a Ludlow-based poet, and is dated by Hanna to c. 1270 (Hanna 2011, 355; Hathaway et al. 1975, xix–xxi).³⁴ An alliterative English version based on the verse original, dated by Hanna (2011, 355) to c. 1380, existed until at least the sixteenth century, when Leland wrote a synopsis of it, but is now also lost. It is clear that the copying of *Fouke* took place in two different periods: the first section (up to fol. 53r, l. 28) is, according to Revard, indicative of the scribe's hand from c. 1325–27, while the second section dates to c. 1333–35, based primarily on the

³² BLDM: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Royal_MS_12_C_XII; BL Detailed Record: <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=19451>. For a table of the quiring, contents, and hands of the manuscript, see O'Rourke (2000, 26).

³³ When referring to the historical family, I use the spelling *Fitzwarin*. When referring to the fictionalised protagonists, I use *Fitz Waryn* (or lower-case *fitz* if preceded by a first name). Of course, the difficulty of disentangling historical figures from historical fictions is itself highly telling and much exploited by the romance.

³⁴ Various editors and critics of *Fouke* have reconstructed sections of this underlying octosyllabic verse, beginning with Thomas Wright (1855), followed by A. C. Wood (1911), Louis Brandin (1930), and Hathaway et al. (1975). Hathaway et al.'s introduction lists a series of prose passages that suggest underlying verse: pp. 2–3 (short passages); p. 8, ll. 15–27; p. 10, l. 30–p. 12, l. 5; pp. 9, 12, 14, 15 (fragments); p. 17, ll. 8–23; pp. 18–21 (fragments); p. 25, l. 36–p. 26, l. 12; pp. 26–9 (fragments); p. 34, ll. 29–35 (mono-rhymed quatrains); pp. 35–6 (fragments); p. 41, l. 34–p. 42, l. 17; pp. 43–5 (fragments); p. 48, l. 29–p. 49, l. 1; p. 52, ll. 5–11; p. 56, ll. 28–30. Aphoristic couplets are also identifiable at: p. 10, ll. 30–1; p. 21, ll. 30–1; p. 32, l. 5; p. 61, ll. 12–13. The original verse text is also preserved in the prophecies relating to Whittington (p. 6, ll. 19–36; p. 60, ll. 1–61).

presence of Revard's criterion *5b* (a hooked *i*-stroke) (Revard 2000, 60–61; Ker 1965, xx–xxi; Hathaway et al. 1975, xlv–xlvii).

The last manuscript connected to the Ludlow scribe is London, British Library, Harley MS 2253.³⁵ The manuscript is believed to have been compiled by the Ludlow scribe shortly after 1340: Revard dates the scribe's hand from folios 49r to 140r to 1331–41, with only *De martiro sancti Wistani* on folio 140v bearing the later dating of 1346–47 (Revard 2007, 98–99, n. 7). Harley 2253 has been of particular interest to scholars of Middle English since it is one of the main repositories of pre-Chaucerian Middle English lyric. Its contents are collectively known as the 'Harley Lyrics': they number 116 in total and include prose and verse in Middle English, insular French, and Latin (for a full table of contents, see Appendix 1).³⁶ Although known collectively as lyrics, the manuscript includes a wide variety of texts that modern critics might classify as romance, fabliau, love lyric, political plaint, praise poetry, medical texts, paint recipes, bible stories, and hagiography. As is often remarked by English scholars seeking to fortify the teleology of the growing influence of English as a 'national' language, Harley 2253 contains the highest proportion of English material of the Ludlow scribe's works (Turville-Petre 1996, 192–217). However, Middle English in Harley 2253 still only accounts for around 25 per cent of its material (Busby 2015, 54): the majority of Harley 2253 is in insular French.

An initial point to make concerning the Ludlow scribe's works is his frequent authorial role. Scholars are now virtually unanimously of the opinion that the Ludlow scribe is the prosifier of *Fouke* in Royal 12 C XII. He is also the probable author of the *Estoyres de la Bible* (art. 71) — the lengthy Old Testament stories in Harley 2253 — since both texts are in a distinctive form of insular French inflected by West Midlands English, which has been attributed to the scribe himself (Hathaway et al. 1975, xxxvii; Thompson 2000, 280–87; Wilshire 1988). Matthew Fisher (2012, 105–46) has also persuasively argued that we should consider the Ludlow scribe as what he calls a 'scribal author'.³⁷

³⁵ *BLDM*: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Harley_MS_2253; BL Detailed Record: <https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=7704>. The manuscript also exists in facsimile (Ker 1965). The manuscript has been fully transcribed and translated into modern English in both online and print editions. See Fein (2015a): <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/fein-harley2253-volume-1>; <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/fein-harley2253-volume-2>; <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/fein-harley2253-volume-3>.

³⁶ See References (*The 'Harley Lyrics'*) for the edited texts. The editions are also available online at *Middle English Texts Series*, University of Rochester: <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/fein-harley2253-volume-1>; <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/fein-harley2253-volume-2>; <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/fein-harley2253-volume-3>.

³⁷ 'Scribal authorship' is a neologism devised by Fisher (2012), whose argument is that scribal agency is not circumscribed by an imperative simply to reproduce an exemplar accurately; rather, scribes alter, rewrite, and transform the texts that they copy, as well as outright authoring new ones, such that the medieval evidence undermines and rejects the post-medieval 'axiomatic division between scribe and author' (1).

Fisher points, in particular, to the scribe's extensive intervention in the Royal 12 C XII English *Metrical Chronicle* and his possible authorship of Royal's Latin *contrafactum*, the Office of Thomas of Lancaster. Similarly, in her edition of the text from a different manuscript (Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, MS Gg. 4.27 (2)), Rosamund Allen highlights the Ludlow scribe's notable embellishing of *Kyng Horn* (Allen 1984, 61–62). Susanna Fein (2015b, 67) also notes that the Anglo-Saxon saints' lives (Ethelbert; Etfred; Wistan) in Latin prose are redacted from longer *vitae*, and speculates that any or all could represent abridgements devised by the scribe himself. Finally, *A bok of swevenyng* (art. 85) is only known in Harley 2253 and may, according to Fein (2015b, 67), be another scribe-authored work based on the Latin *Somniale Danielis* also preserved in Royal 12 C XII (fols 81v–86r).

Perhaps the most important point to note about all three of the books containing the Ludlow scribe's hand is that they are all compilations. This point is, for our purposes, a significant one, since it points to the existence of a number of complex, 'off-camera' networks by which texts and exemplars were circulating, often as independent booklets prior to their compilation in manuscripts. Let us now look more closely at current theories of each book's production in order then to discuss their implications for our understanding of the literary networks of fourteenth-century Ludlow.

Harley 273 is predominantly the work of another scribe (Harley 273 scribe A), a hand in formal book-hand *textura formata*. This scribe copies the manuscript uninterrupted from fols 1r–181rb (booklets 1–5).³⁸ At this point he stops mid-way through copying the *Manuel des pechés* and the Ludlow scribe takes over in his *anglicana*, completing the *Manuel* and filling the rest of the booklet (i.e. to fol. 198vb) with the help of another scribe, Harley 273 scribe C (whom Fein has also identified as Harley 2253 scribe D, see below). Furthermore, the presence of the Ludlow scribe throughout scribe A's folios as a rubricator (methodologically adding coloured explicits, initials, diagrams, and paraphs) leads Fein to describe Harley 273 — unlike the Ludlow scribe's other books — as a manuscript written by collaborating scribes subsequently compiled by the Ludlow scribe. Fein (2016, 15) suggests that, at this early point in his career, the scribe was operating 'in a formal scriptorium or school or site of clerkly service', possibly as scribe A's tutee.

It is likely that this collaboration was local to Ludlow: evidence of origin includes, among other examples, fol. 1v, which bears in red ink the dedication date of 13 February for the Church of St.

³⁸ For a list of Harley 273 scribe A's presence in the manuscript, see Fein (2016, 8–10).

Laurence at Ludlow. Similarly, the fact that the Ludlow scribe also fills spaces in the manuscript with copies of charms and indulgences — coupled with the fact that he acts as marginal annotator, corrector, and rubricator for the main scribe's work — supports the suggestion that it was the Ludlow scribe who compiled the book himself and possibly maintained access to it. Finally, it is clear that this manuscript itself travelled in the medieval period: fol. 1* bears the ownership inscription of John Clerk, grocer and apocetharius of Edward IV, and warden of the London Company of Grocers in 1467 and 1475.³⁹

The production and compilation of Royal 12 C XII has been carefully studied by the editors of *Fouke* (1975) and, more recently, Jason O'Rourke (2000; 2005). It is agreed that the Ludlow scribe compiled quires (booklets 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7) of his own work alongside pre-existing, independent booklets copied by other scribes that he had somehow previously acquired and whose blank spaces he filled in. For O'Rourke (2005, 53), the discrete nature of Royal 12 C XII's booklets and their material condition (particularly their 'grubby outer leaves') suggests that 'they had a life outside the collection for some time', i.e. that they may have been circulated as independent pamphlets — a point to which we shall return below.

For Harley 2253, the Ludlow scribe seems, again, to have built his manuscript around the independent, acquired booklets of another scribe's work. The work of this scribe (scribe A) forms the beginning of the manuscript (booklets 1 and 2, quires 1–4, fols 1–48).⁴⁰ Scribe A's works are religious material in insular French in late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century textura hand, and predate the work of the Ludlow scribe by a few decades.⁴¹ Revard (2007, 99–100) points out that the four saints added to the *Vitas Patrum* are locally significant and would have been of use and interest to a preacher in the Ludlow area, suggesting that in scribe A we may be dealing with another, earlier local scribe.⁴² As Fein (2013, 31–33) notes, the Ludlow scribe engages with scribe A's material as an attentive reader, rubricator, occasional corrector, and finishing artist, adorning A's work with red-coloured titles,

³⁹ For this folio, see BL Catalogue:

<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/ILLUMIN.ASP?Size=mid&IllID=15166>.

⁴⁰ The internal booklet structure of the manuscript was first identified by Ker (1965, xvi) and corrected by Fein (2015a, 5–7). The structure is as follows: Booklet 1 = quires 1–2, fols 1–22; Booklet 2 = quires 3–4, fols 23–48; Booklet 3 = quire 5, fols 49–52; Booklet 4 = quire 6, fols 53–62; Booklet 5 = quires 7–11, fols 63–105; Booklet 6 = quires 12–14, fols 106–33; Booklet 7 = quire 15, fols 134–40.

⁴¹ Ker (1965, ix) notes that items 2–7 also appear in Paris, BnF, fonds français, 19525, and items 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 appear in London, BL, Egerton MS 2710, perhaps indicating that these derive from *en bloc* production in a monastic context or *pecia* production in a university one.

⁴² The added saints are: St John Evangelist (patron of the Palmers' Guild in Ludlow parish Church of St Lawrence); St John Baptist (patron of Ludlow Hospital); St Bartholomew (patron of the church in Richard's Castle); and St Peter (patron of church at Leominster Priory).

initials, and paraphs (a work that he never completed).⁴³ The Ludlow scribe affixed his own booklets to the pre-existing book, even matching scribe A's page size (larger than Royal 12 C XII and Harley 273).⁴⁴ Finally, there are two more hands present in Harley 2253. Scribe C designates a slightly later hand that added in eight paint recipes in Middle English prose in the column and a half of blank space on fol. 52v, and also possibly finished off in red ink the final text on fol. 140v (Fein 2013, 32–33). A fourth hand (scribe D) is present in the flyleaves, cut from an old account roll for a Mortimer household based in Ardmulghan, County Meath, Ireland.⁴⁵ For an example of the hand of each scribe in Harley 2253, see Appendix 2.

Based on the manuscript evidence, critics have been able to build a picture of the Ludlow scribe's life. Fein (2015a, i, 8) has estimated a lifespan from the 1290s to c. 1350, with his scribal career beginning in the early 1310s. It is generally agreed that, as Revard (2004, 117) writes, the Ludlow scribe 'probably died of the Black Death soon after April 1349, when he wrote the latest known legal deed in his hand'.

Suggestions as to the scribe's professional and social statuses have varied considerably. Early suggestions pointed to connections with Roger Mortimer and with Bishop Adam de Orleton, based on evidence for a connection to Hereford Cathedral.⁴⁶ The editors of *Fouke* (Hathaway et al. 1975, xxxviii) surmised that the scribe was from a family likely in service of the Mortimers, 'a priest, probably a canon of Hereford and a follower of Adam de Orleton, bishop of Hereford 1317–27'. Such connections would, as Revard (2000, 27) notes, 'have meant that the Harley scribe moved among the wealthiest, most powerful and sophisticated people of his time on an international level'. Such grandiose connections were already somewhat suspect before Revard's discovery in 1975 of the scribe's legal writs and charters: it was unclear, for example, why Roger or Adam would be interested in several items in the Ludlow scribe's books, not least the romance of the Fitzwarin family to which

⁴³ Revard (2007, 57–59) dates these rubrications to c. 1330–31, again against criterion 5b (the hooked *i*-stroke).

⁴⁴ Revard (2007, 101) has deduced that the Ludlow scribe's life of the local saint Ethelbert (currently the first item of Booklet 4) was initially intended to continue A's work directly, since it extends A's booklets visually (by following the two-column format), thematically (as religious material), and it is palaeographically the earliest of the Ludlow scribe's texts in Harley 2253 (c. 1331–33). Fein (2013, 31) supports this thesis, also pointing out that *Vita Sancti Ethelberti* is the only work of the Ludlow scribe to have a red-ink title, like those added to A's booklets.

⁴⁵ Given the connection to Ireland visible here and in Harley 273's inclusion of the *Purgatoire Saint Patrice*, we might speculate Mortimer channels as the route of, or motivation for, the *Purgatoire*'s transmission to Ludlow.

⁴⁶ Harley 273's liturgical calendar lists the feasts of the saints in not only Ludlow, but also Leominster and Hereford (Ethelbert and Cantilupe); on Royal 12 C XII, fol. 6v the Ludlow scribe copied seal-mottoes associated with bishops of Hereford Richard de Swinfield (1282–1317) and Adam of Orleton (1317–27); the fly-leaves (fols 1v/142r) of Harley 2253 in the Ludlow scribe's hand are extracts from the ordinal of Hereford Cathedral; and Harley 2253's *Vita sancti Ethelberti* commemorates the Cathedral's patron saint. Similarly, the Mortimer account rolls on the other side of the same leaves as Harley 2253's ordinal extracts may point to a Mortimer connection.

neither of them were connected. These connections were more definitively ruled out by Revard's work, which indicated that the scribe's connections were somewhat more modest. Revard (2000, 74–81) makes a convincing case for understanding the Ludlow scribe as a cleric-chaplain in the service of the Ludlows of Stokesay Castle, a Ludlow-based merchant family elevated to knightly status. There is much circumstantial evidence to support this claim, not least the fact that they were related to the Hodnets and Fitzwarins, thus explaining the scribe's work on *Fouke*. Similarly, Sir Laurence Ludlow was a wool merchant whose trade would explain the inclusion in Harley 2253 of fiscal-protest songs like *The Flemish Insurrection* (art. 48) and *Against the King's Taxes* (art. 114), and whose brushes with the law fit with political-protest lyrics like *The Song of Trailbaston* (art. 80). Revard has since added other possible identifications: in 2005, he wrote that the Ludlow scribe 'was certainly a legal scrivener, probably a chaplain, possibly a household cleric for Joan Mortimer Talbot, Lady of Richard's Castle (...) or Sir Laurence Ludlow of Stokesay' (2005b, 114), while in 2007 he ventured an identification of Thomas or Richard de Billebury, parish chaplain of Richard's Castle (101).

Based on these pieces of manuscript evidence and possible biographical outlines, it is possible to formulate useful conceptualisations of the Ludlow scribe's practices of book production. For instance, Jason O'Rourke (2005, 55–59) suggests that the Ludlow scribe was a professional scribe working as a legal scrivener-chaplain, for whom the copying of literary texts was a kind of private hobby horse, who collected quires on an *ad hoc*, magpie-like basis over extended periods of time and according to the materials available to him (which may have grown in number along with his literary contacts over the course of his career).⁴⁷ There is much evidence to recommend O'Rourke's argument, not least the scribe's methodology of acquiring, annotating, and filling the gaps of independent booklets to which he then adjoins his own work.⁴⁸ O'Rourke's argument is also in keeping with most critics' assessment of the conceptual structure of the manuscript: while there may be certain local groupings of texts, there is no sustained organising principle to Harley 2253 (Stemmler [1991] 2000; Lerer 2003; Fein 2000).⁴⁹ Equally, as Fein (2016, 1) points out, the scribe's eclectic tastes, regional provenance, and the fact that his hand appears alone and uninterrupted in Harley 2253 from fols 49 to 140 have led critics to assume that he was not attached, at least after Harley 273, to any organised

⁴⁷ This argument draws on work by other scholars on booklets and vernacular miscellanies, namely Robinson (1980) and Hanna (1996b).

⁴⁸ On Harley 2253 as anthology, see Lerer (2003), and Revard (2005b, 111; 2007).

⁴⁹ As a counterpoint to this argument, see Revard (2007). In a similar vein, David L. Jeffrey (2000) sees the manuscript as more holistically informed by Franciscan tastes and concerns.

scriptorium. Keith Busby (2002, ii, 512), for instance, writes that, unlike the amateur scribe of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 86, Harley 2253 is clearly the product of a professional (i.e. trained) scribe, though ‘in neither case are we dealing with a *scriptorium*, monastic or secular’. Revard (2000) also notes that the interrupted copying of *Fouke* fits with the scenario of ‘a man producing *Fouke* for himself or his patron-household’ rather than ‘working on a commission or deadline’ (71).

These assessments of the scribe’s practice and identity are intriguing in and of themselves, and offer valuable insights into lay manuscript production. However, they also pose important questions for the purposes of this chapter: What were the networks of contacts by which the scribe was able to procure his exemplars and booklets? What kinds of networks are instantiated by his training and patronage? What are the implications of such networks for our understanding of the cultural status of the middle March in this period?

One network to which the scribe was connected was that of other local scribes. Susanna Fein has done much to revise the traditional image of the Ludlow scribe as a lone scribe. For example, critics have assumed Harley 2253 scribe C’s additions of paint-recipes simply to have taken place after Scribe B’s full compiling of Harley 2253. Fein (2013, 34), conversely, has pointed out that it is not impossible for it to have been scribe C who compiled the Ludlow scribe’s various booklets, either fully or partially. The two scribes may even have known each other, with scribe C aware of the Ludlow scribe’s intentions for the book. Fein also argues convincingly that the Ludlow scribe and Harley 2253 scribe D were personal acquaintances: not only did the Ludlow scribe have access to at least one of D’s parchment documents after its period of utility (c. 1308–14) and for similar workaday use, but Fein has also ascertained that Harley 2253 scribe D and Harley 273 scribe C are the same scribe (2013, 37). The Ludlow scribe must have known this scribe personally and from an early age, since they collaborated in copying from a single source the *Purgatoire Saint Patrice* in Harley 273 (see above).⁵⁰ Revard (2000, 58) dates the Ludlow scribe’s hand in the *Purgatoire* to 1314–15, a few years before his first independent work, i.e. the copying of the *Short Metrical Chronicle* in c. 1316–17 in Royal 12 C XII, fols 62r–68v. Finally, Fein has shown that a relationship also existed between Harley 273 scribe A and the Ludlow scribe, probably that of tutor and tutee — a status he may have shared with Harley 273 scribe C whose hand is also present in three corrections to Harley 273 scribe A’s copy of the *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle* (fols 90ra–99va; booklet 4), thus also placing him ‘in the same Ludlow milieu’

⁵⁰ The *Purgatoire* is copied first by the Ludlow scribe (eleven columns, fols 191va–194ra), then D (five columns, fols 194rb–195rb), then the Ludlow scribe again (nine columns and four lines, fols 195va–197vb).

(2016, 16; 18, n. 8). From this evidence, Fein concludes that there was indeed ‘a textual community of scribes and readers that influenced the young Harley scribe’ (2016, 16). What we have here, then, is a local network of scribes with whom the Ludlow scribe was interacting over the course his life: first, at the beginning of his career — and possibly in a school/scriptorium context — Harley 273 scribes A and C/Harley 2253 scribe D (with whom he may have remained in contact); and second, towards his career’s end, possibly with Harley 2253 scribe C.

Another network of contacts is provided by that of the scribe’s possible patrons. As we have seen, many cases can be (and have been) made for several different identities of the Ludlow scribe and for his possible employers. Interestingly, O’Rourke (2000, 220) suggests an alternative patronage model, whereby the Ludlow scribe may have undertaken projects for a number of local patrons. Again, the Ludlow scribe would, in this scenario, be acting not only as a lone hobbyist, copying texts for his own pleasure, but also as a scribe catering to the demands of a local, multilingual network of literati. Such a scenario fits well with O’Rourke’s argument that the scribe’s booklets (especially those of Royal 12 C XII) might have circulated independently prior to compilation; it seems logical to imagine them to have circulated in several households simultaneously (2000, 221). Such a model resonates with Fein’s underlining of Harley 2253’s oral dimensions: her characterisation of Harley 2253 as ‘a document created very much with oral performance as a highlighted purpose’ (2007, 88–89) reinforces the notion of a local network of audiences who might have consumed the book, whether as pre-compilation parts or as a post-compilation confection, and to whom the Ludlow scribe may have catered as a *jongleur*-esque ‘master of entertainments’ (2007, 94).

Moreover, the multi-patronage model opens up any number of networks by which exemplars might have been procured and transported to Ludlow. For instance, the scribe need not have been in the direct service of such illustrious figures as Roger Mortimer or Adam de Orleton for it to be nonetheless clear that he was, as O’Rourke (2005, 48) puts it, ‘an active member of a flourishing regional literary culture, which had far-reaching connections’. We might equally endorse the suggestion of Daniel Birkholz (2009) that the wide-ranging travels of Hereford’s clerics provided major networks for the transmission of texts to the Ludlow scribe’s milieu. Or take Revard’s suggestion of Sir Laurence as patron, who, being a highly successful wool merchant, would have travelled on the trade routes that linked Ludlow to London and English port towns, and may even have journeyed onwards to centres in France, Flanders, and Italy. Could the Ludlow scribe have travelled with Laurence? Or could Laurence

have brought back to the scribe insular and European texts encountered on his travels? Or even simply returned with memories of what he had encountered that motivated the scribe to acquire texts via his own channels? The work of scholars like O'Rourke, Birkholz, and Fein paints the much more dynamic — and, in my view, realistic — picture of a chaplain-clerk in contact with his local networks of scribes, ecclesiasts, patrons, and audiences, and who thereby had access not only to a number of libraries and exemplars, but also, crucially, to those individuals' own connections, be they scribal, noble, ecclesiastic, monastic, or mercantile.

Still, we might ask: given the cosmopolitanism of several of the figures in his local area, how cosmopolitan was the Ludlow scribe himself? There is evidence that he may have been rather: Revard (2007, 102), for example, speculates that he may have acquired the textura booklets of Harley 2253 scribe A while studying in Oxford. Further evidence of the Ludlow scribe's cosmopolitanism lies in the Italian influence on his hand: the editors of *Fouke*, on the recommendation of M. B. Parkes, suggest that the scribe's **g** written with a long, flat base atypical of anglicana may be of Italian origin (1975, xxxix and n. 41). Similarly, the scribe's principal point indicating a medial pause is a rounded version of the *virgula suspensiva*, often complemented by the *virgula plana* at the full pause. This system may also suggest Italian influence, since it is the one recommended by the Italian scholar Boncompagno da Signa (c. 1165–c. 1240) (Hathaway et al. 1975, xxxix, n. 41). Italian influence is further suggested by the scribe's inclusion of the prayer *Anima Christi sanctifica me* (art. 19), often attributed to Pope John XXII (1316–34) and his papal curia in Avignon, and dated to c. 1330. Ker (1965, x) attributes the 'speedy arrival' of the text in Herefordshire to Bishop Adam's connections to the papal curia.⁵¹ Marilyn Corrie (2003, 38) similarly speculates that the scribe may have picked these features up from Italian jurists in Avignon, perhaps while accompanying Bishop Adam on his travels to the papal curia. Similarly, given the Irish connections associated with his works (the Meath flyleaf and its Mortimer connections, the copying of Ireland-related texts like the *Purgatoire* and *Kyng Horn*), it is not impossible that the Ludlow scribe may have journeyed westward too, as his colleague Harley 2253 scribe D/Harley 273 scribe C almost certainly did (Fein 2013, 38). Other European influences on the Ludlow scribe have also been suggested: Barbara Nolan (2000, 303) argues that the Ludlow scribe's anthologising of fabliau material as part of an ethical programme is in line with continental French

⁵¹ The poem was also translated into Welsh several times from as early as the mid-fourteenth century, and formed the basis for a poem by Dafydd ap Gwilym (*Englynion yr Anima Christi*). It may, therefore, have arrived in Ludlow via Wales, rather than Hereford Cathedral. See Roberts (1954–56), Bryant-Quinn (2001). For Dafydd's poem, see: <http://www.dafyddapgwilym.net/cym/3win.htm>.

practices, and Richard Firth Green (1989, 310–11) also underlines the influence of the continental French fashion for contrafacta on the *Lutel Wot Hit Any Mon* poems. These influences may be tertiary, arriving in the Ludlow scribe's work via insular practices imitating continental ones, or from second-hand contact with well-travelled colleagues, clerics, patrons, etc., or with Italians and other foreigners encountered in insular contexts. Or they could stem from the Ludlow scribe's own direct contact with continental cultures and practices.

The language of several of the lyrics in Harley 2253 also points to complex literary networks that have yet to be fully studied. As Fein (2007) remarks, the 'diverse dialectal origins' of the Middle English lyrics have long been discussed.⁵² They largely indicate two points. First, the possible influence of the Welsh language and its literature on the lyrics reflects cultural and linguistic interpenetration of Welsh and English in the border Marches.⁵³ Second, the grouping of dialectal forms supports the thesis of a wide and early dispersal of alliterative English verse (Fein 2007, 75).⁵⁴ Frances McSparran (2000, 418–20) has argued that numerous relict non-South West Midland forms, appearing in certain sequences of poems, for example nos 41–8, 60–67, suggest that certain lyrics circulated across England as groups.⁵⁵

More, several of the lyrics are identifiably well travelled. For example, *The Fair Maid of Ribblesdale* (art. 34) states its own origin in the eponymous Yorkshire dale, though Brook (1933, 56) suggests northwest Midland origin. Marion Glasscoe (1986) suggests that the poem was a Cistercian work, possibly by a member of the abbeys of Whalley or Sawley; it was presumably then transmitted via Cistercian networks, possibly to Buildwas. Similarly, *Gilote et Johane* (art. 37) positions its own place of composition as Winchester — 'A Wyncestre fet, verroiemēt' (l. 343; made/performed at Winchester, verily) — suggesting some kind of contact between Ludlow and the central-southern English city. Exactly how and via which networks many of these texts arrived in the Marches remains in need of investigation. For now, what we *can* say is that, as Marilyn Corrie (2000, 442, n. 52) notes,

⁵² See Brook (1933), Samuels ([1984] 1989), and, more recently, Putter (2013).

⁵³ Several supposedly Celtic influences on the Harley lyrics were first described by A. T. E. Matonis in a 1972 article, many of whose findings were disputed by Helen Fulton (1985) and defended by Matonis in 1988. This remains a contentious issue.

⁵⁴ For the thesis of the dispersal of alliterative verse, see Hanna (2002) and Pearsall (1977, 120–25).

⁵⁵ These relict forms include present plural in *-es* rather than the Ludlow scribe's standard *-ep*; present third person singular forms in *-es* or *-s* rather than *-ep*; 'death' spelt as *ded(e)* rather than *dep(e)*; and present plural in *-en*.

manuscripts like Harley 2253 and Digby 86 provide ample evidence for a vibrant, multilingual culture of literary circulation in the southwest Midlands (and Marches) at this time.⁵⁶

It is also clear that these networks were fairly current: the copying of a number of poems into Harley 2253 can be dated to within at least a century of their composition, and some much less. For instance, *Gilote et Johane* (art. 37) states its own date of composition as 15th September 1301 (ll. 344–45). If the poem is to be believed,⁵⁷ the lyric would have travelled from composition in Winchester to copying in Ludlow within 30 to 40 years. Similarly, *The Flemish Insurrection* (art. 48) celebrates the successful revolt from 1302–5 of the Flemish weavers against French rule, and thus must be less than forty years old by the time it is compiled into Harley 2253. Some lyrics are younger still. As we have seen, *Anima Christi sanctifica me* (art. 19) is copied by the Ludlow scribe within a decade of its supposed composition in Avignon. Perhaps the most contemporary poem of Harley 2253 is *Against the King's Taxes* (art. 114). This poem, dated to c. 1338, is a complaint against the fiscal policy of Edward III, criticising the levy imposed on wool exports during that period in order to raise funds for the Hundred Years' War.⁵⁸ There is no evidence that it is a local text.⁵⁹ Yet, its copying by the Ludlow scribe has been dated by Revard (2000, 62–63) to c. 1138–40, or at least sometime before 1342. The poem's copying and compilation in Harley 2253 thus occurs barely a year or two later than its composition elsewhere.

Although so much of his life is unknown, the Ludlow scribe — like the cast of characters that populate his region — cuts a cosmopolitan figure, and his activities show his locality to be well connected in wide-ranging and up-to-date literary networks. Analysing the texts of the Ludlow scribe as literary objects will be the objective of the following chapters; for now, suffice to say that this world of mobile patrons, scribes, texts, manuscripts, and even parts of manuscripts reveals a Marcher community very much in touch with the wider literary world.

⁵⁶ See also Hines (2004, esp. 71–104), Scahill (2003, esp. 26–28), Fein (2014).

⁵⁷ For a provocative reading of this text's counterfactual possibilities, see Birkholz (2015).

⁵⁸ On this text, see Aspin (1953, 105–7).

⁵⁹ The text exists in only one other manuscript from Whalley Abbey (London, BL, Additional MS 10, 374) discussed by Diana Tyson (2010, 84), who formulates a stemma suggesting the Harley text (H) to be a copy of a copy (x) of the original poem (O), while the Additional text (A) is a copy of a copy (y) of x. A's connection to Whalley Abbey, as with *The Fair Maid of Ribblesdale* (art. 34), is suggestive of Cistercian networks.

1.3. *Coeth awdur mesur, moesau Ffrengig*: Cwm Tawe, c. 1380–c. 1410

Medieval Wales represents a world rich in textual production, circulation, and consumption. Yet, for a number of reasons mentioned in the Introduction (§2C), it has yielded a relatively low number of surviving manuscripts.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, scholars have succeeded in tracing varied communities of readers across Wales and other Celtic-speaking regions. For example, Patrick Sims-Williams (1998) has argued that surviving texts and artefacts (not only prose and poetry, but also glosses, stone inscriptions, etc.) represent a snapshot of a wide and varied written literary culture. Similarly, several recent studies have underlined the Welsh-Latin multilingualism of Wales before and after the Norman Conquest (Henley 2016; Russell 2016; Zeiser 2012).

Vibrant literary microcultures were active throughout both *pura Wallia* and *Marchia Wallie*, especially, for the latter, after the Edwardian Conquest of 1282–84.⁶¹ For instance, since the publication in 1948 of Griffith John Williams's *Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg* (The Literary Tradition of Glamorgan), it has been widely supposed that medieval Glamorgan was host to a highly active network of scribes and patrons, including Hopcyn ap Tomas ab Einion of Ynysforgan, the most probable patron of the Red Book of Hergest (Oxford, Jesus College MS 111).⁶²

Before discussing the Red Book at greater length, it is worth flagging up one significant piece of earlier evidence relating to one Llywelyn 'Bren' (Llywelyn ap Gruffydd ap Rhys). Executed in 1317 for his revolt against Edward II, Llywelyn was a nobleman of Glamorgan (lord of Senghenydd and Misguin). A post-mortem inventory of his possessions lists four unnamed Welsh books and 'i. romanz de la rose'.⁶³ Clearly, French-language literature was present in early fourteenth-century Glamorgan and, without extrapolating too far from one example, at least some Welshmen were consuming French-language texts before the period of the Red Book, to which we now turn.

Williams (1948, 9–14) suggested Hopcyn as the patron of the Red Book on the basis that the manuscript contains five poems addressed to him, and another to one Tomas ap Hopcyn, presumably the son of the former. Another item in the manuscript, a short wisdom text, is entitled *Casbethau*

⁶⁰ These include conquest, Anglicisation, poor weather conditions, the Dissolution, wars, absence of universities, and the greater influence and power of courts and religious institutions in England. See Lloyd-Morgan (2013, 212).

⁶¹ Several scholars have formulated useful syntheses of medieval Welsh literary production post-1282. See, for example, Roberts (1999), Lloyd-Morgan (2008), Fulton (2015a).

⁶² It was Prys Morgan (1978) who first corrected our understanding of the location of the Tomas family from Ynystawe to Ynysforgan, roughly a mile further upstream. Morgan also first outlined the networks by which the manuscript travelled from Swansea to Hergest Court, Herefordshire (46–47). For full details of the Red Book, see *Report on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language* (Evans 1898–1910, ii, 1–29) and Huws (2003, 1–30; 2000, esp. 80–83). RG: <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/cy/tei-header.php?ms=Jesus111>.

⁶³ *Cardiff Records*, iv, 58. See BHO: <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cardiff-records/vol4/pp55-62>.

Gwilym Hir Saer Hopkyn ap Thomas (The Dislikes of Long William, craftsman of Hopcyn ap Tomas).

Brynley Roberts (1966–68) confirmed this identification, when he located an attestation in a colophon at the end of the copy of *Brut y Brenhinedd* in Library Company of Philadelphia MS 8680.O in which the main Red Book scribe identifies both himself and his ‘master’:

y llyuyr hwnn a yscriuennwys howel vychan uab howel goch o uuellt yn llwyr (...) o arch
a gorchymun y vaester nyt amgen Hopkyn uab thomas uab einawn (fol 68)

This book was written entirely by Hywel Fychan son of Hywel Goch of Builth (...) at the request and order of his master, namely Hopcyn son of Thomas son of Einion).⁶⁴

A monastic origin has often been assumed for the Red Book, usually Margam Abbey.⁶⁵ Yet, Gifford Charles-Edwards (1979–80) has convincingly argued that Hywel’s naming of himself in the colophon and his reference to Hopcyn as his *[m]aester* both support the thesis that Hywel was one of the professional, secular, non-monastic scribes that, she suggests, increasingly flourished in fourteenth-century Wales, catering to the demands of nobles, professionals, and friars largely unmet by monastic scriptoria (250).⁶⁶ Similarly, Christine James (1993, 34) has pointed out that if Hopcyn was as rich as is suggested by the praise poems dedicated to him, then he could well have supported his own small, secular scriptorium. Moreover, this non-monastic thesis indicates Glamorgan’s participation not only in established monastic networks, but also secular scribal ones: Charles-Edwards (1979–80, 252) points in particular to Oxford as a place from which graduates were returning to Wales and the March as administrators, clerks, and scribes, and notes the influence of the Oxford hand on Welsh books such the White Book of Rhydderch.⁶⁷

Hopcyn ap Tomas was clearly an important literary figure in late fourteenth-century Glamorgan. He is referred to by contemporaries as an important man of letters, invested in French-language literary culture. Meurig ab Iorwerth refers to him, in a poem included in the Red Book, as

⁶⁴ For a full account of Philadelphia 8680.O, and the only one to benefit from direct contact with the codex, see Guy (2014).

⁶⁵ See, for example, Williams (1974, 340, n. 1). On the importance of monastic foundations, particularly Cistercian ones, for manuscript production and literary patronage in medieval Wales and the Marches, see Lloyd-Morgan (2013), Johnston (2013), Fulton (2016, 440–43). For an account of the importance of Margam Abbey up to 1225, see Patterson (2002).

⁶⁶ As examples of fifteenth-century professional lay scribes, Charles-Edwards points to Lewis Glyn Cothi, Gutun Owain, and Gwilym Tew. Another example might be Gwilym Was Da, scribe of three law books and recorded as a burgess of Y Drenewydd (Newton) near Dinefwr in 1302/3 (see Owen and Jenkins, 1979–80). On Hywel’s colophon, see also Johnston (2014, 421–23).

⁶⁷ Charles-Edwards (1979–80) also makes several convincing palaeographic comparisons between Hywel’s hand and contemporary (conventionally anonymous) monastic hands in order to highlight the differences in style, layout, letter spacing, and rhythm. It is also true that secular patronising of scribes and bardic families is attested into as late as the eighteenth century in Ireland; the situation in Wales may be comparable.

‘Coeth awdur mesur, moesau Ffrengig’ (l. 57; author refined in the way of French manners).⁶⁸ As Helen Fulton (2011b, 200–1) neatly puts it, Hopcyn was ‘part of a network of Welsh gentry’ for whom ‘the imitation of French courtly genres, and the translation into Welsh of highly-regarded texts in Latin and French’ garnered them access to ‘the charmed circle of European nobility’. Although we might question the terminology of ‘imitation’, it is true that the literary activities of nobles like Hopcyn acted as a way to stake a claim for Welsh textual communities in wider, pan-European textual networks based on a supralocal literary culture in Latin and French.

The investment of Hopcyn and his household in French-language culture is borne out in several of the manuscripts associated with him, not least the Red Book. The Red Book of Hergest is without doubt one of the most important manuscripts of and for medieval Welsh literature.⁶⁹ Ceri Lewis (1971, 481) has described it as ‘the richest single manuscript compilation of medieval Welsh literature’, while Daniel Huws calls it ‘chwarel fwyaf llenyddiaeth Gymraeg’ (2003, 1; the biggest quarry of Welsh literature), a ‘one-volume library’ whose purpose was ‘to gather into one book the classics of Welsh literature’ (2000, 82). Along with the White Book of Rhydderch, it is the only manuscript to preserve the native tales translated and published by Lady Charlotte Guest in the nineteenth century as the ‘Mabinogion’: the Four Branches of the *Mabinogi*, *Y Tair Rhramant*, *Breuddwyd Maxen Wledig*, *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*, and *Culhwch ac Olwen*.

Several of these and the other ‘classics’ of the Red Book are translations/adaptations of texts in insular or continental French. *Ystorya Carolo Magno* contains adaptations of the *Roman d’Otinel*,⁷⁰ the *Chanson de Roland*, and the *Pelerinage de Charlemagne*; *Bown o Hamtwn* is an adaptation of the insular French *Beuve de Haumton*; *Seith Doethon Rufein* is a version of *Les Sept Sages de Rome*; the *Hwsmonaeth* is an adaptation of Walter de Henley’s *Dite de Hosebondrie*; and, of course, there are strong connections between *Geraint*, *Owein*, and *Peredur* and Chrétien’s *Erec*, *Yvain*, and *Conte du Graal*, respectively. *Peredur* also betrays familiarity with other sources, including the *Elucidation*, the *Deuxième Continuation*, the *Didot Perceval*, and possibly also *Bliocadran* (Lloyd-Morgan 2009, 138–39). Similarly, several of the *diarhebion* (proverbs) are also derived from non-Welsh sources, including continental French, insular French, Latin, and English (Lloyd-Morgan 2015, 186).

⁶⁸ The text is edited in Daniel (2002, 125–37). Daniel’s note on this phrase reads: ‘Cyfeiriad diddorol sy’n awgrymu naill ai fod diwylliant Ffrainc wedi dylanwadu ar Hopcyn neu ynteu ei fod mor gwrtais â Ffrancwr’ (133, n. 57; an interesting expression suggesting either that French culture has influenced Hopcyn or that he is as courtly as a Frenchman).

⁶⁹ For a full account of the manuscript’s contents, codicological structure, and palaeography, see Huws (2003).

⁷⁰ Erich Poppe (2014) notes that the Welsh translation follows the version of the insular French *Roman d’Otinel* preserved as a fragment in Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. fr. 5094, a manuscript from the mid-thirteenth century.

Some concessions: the Red Book itself contains no French; none of the RB scribes writes French in any of their other manuscripts; and only one of these translations can be linked to the direct patronage of Hopcyn (see below). Nevertheless, this list does indicate three things: first, the wide and heterogeneous range of French texts (and their manuscript exemplars) that had been circulating at different points and in different locations across Wales and the March over preceding centuries; second, the enduring interest and value of those texts; and third, the complex networks of textual transmission to which Wales and, more specifically, Hopcyn's Glamorgan were connected.

Beyond the Red Book, there are many more manuscripts can be connected to Hopcyn and his Glamorgan court (for a tabulated version of these, see Appendix 3). Several are flagged up by another Red Book *awdl* to Hopcyn by the poet Dafydd y Coed, which mentions a number of other books to be found in Hopcyn's library: '(...) y Lusidarius, | A'r Greal a'r Yniales, | A grym pob cyfraith a'i gras' (ll. 94–96; the Elucidarium and the Grail and the Annals and the force of each law and its pardon).⁷¹ Much scholarly attention has been paid to the references in this *awdl*, not least by the pioneering work of Christine James (1993; 2007), who has proven them to be corroborated by several surviving manuscripts copied in the hands of the Red Book scribes. Let us take them in order.

First, the *Lusidarius* has two possible manuscript referents. One is Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 190, which contains a copy of the Welsh *Elucidarium*, *Ystoria Lucidar*, in the hand of Red Book scribe C (also known in scholarship as X91). It is more likely, however, that it refers to Aberystwyth, NLW MS Llanstephan 27, which contains a copy of *Ystoria Lucidar* in Hywel's own hand.⁷² In his introduction to his edition of *Buched Dewi*, D. Simon Evans (1959) suggested that Hopcyn commissioned Hywel to work on this manuscript, possibly as a counterpart to the Red Book, with Llanstephan 27 containing mainly religious material and the Red Book mainly secular. However, Brynley Roberts (1966–67) suggested that the manuscript was commissioned not by Hopcyn but by his brother, Rhys ap Tomas ab Einiawn, to whom the manuscript contains five references (three on fol. 152v, two on fol. 153r).⁷³

It is also worth pointing out that Llanstephan 27 is one of three manuscripts, which, all containing the hand of Hywel Fychan, once comprised the Red Book of Talgarth. The other constituent

⁷¹ The text is edited in Daniel (2002, 19–29).

⁷² RG: <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/cy/ms-home.php?ms=Llst27>.

⁷³ See also James (2007, 40). Several scholars suspect the existence of a third brother, Siencyn ap Tomas, though no work has yet been published arguing the case. Where Hopcyn was associated with secular works and Rhys with the religious, Siencyn may have patronised much of the legal material. I thank Dr Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan for bringing this point to my attention.

parts are now found on fols 39–58 of Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 12 (probably compiled by Hugh Evans, dean of St Asaph, 1560–87),⁷⁴ and pages 101–12 of Cardiff, Central Library, MS 3.242 (*olim* Hafod MS 16).⁷⁵ Significantly, Cardiff 3.242, a trilingual medical manuscript dated to c. 1375–c. 1425 is one of the only surviving Welsh manuscripts to contain any material *in French*, in the form of a few charms and recipes on pages 6–8. It is unknown when or why Hywel’s quire was affixed to Cardiff 3.242, though the *Rhyddiaith Gymraeg* project suggest that it may have been due to the similarity of the hands, including their orthography, rubrication, and decoration. Given his palaeographic similarity to Hywel Fychan, and his contemporaneity with the Red Book scribes’ activities, it is possible that the Cardiff 3.242 scribe may be another Glamorgan-based scribe. Indeed, Lloyd-Morgan (2008, 166) writes that part of the manuscript ‘belongs to the same group as the Red Book of Hergest’. Should this be the case, then Hopcyn’s literary network would provide us with one of the few surviving examples of Welsh scribes writing in French alongside Welsh and Latin, and here in a non-administrative context.

The second reference in Dafydd’s *awdl* — to a *Greal* — is corroborated by Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 11, which contains a copy in Hywel’s hand of *Y Seint Greal*, the Welsh translation-adaptation based, for the first half, on the *Queste del Saint Graal* and, for the second, on *Perlesvaus*.⁷⁶ In her study of the *Greal*, Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan concludes that Hopcyn ap Tomas probably commissioned the Welsh translation of *Y Seint Greal*, and that Peniarth 11 is likely the original manuscript of that translation. She discounts the idea that Hywel was also the translator of the *Greal*, but does suggest that he would have worked in close proximity to the translator, and probably from the translator’s written draft (1978, 45–46).⁷⁷ Lloyd-Morgan has proven, moreover, that the *Queste* and *Perlesvaus* are not the sole sources for *Y Seint Greal*: textual details (her example is Bohort’s magic ring) show that the Welsh adapter(s) must also have been familiar with the *Prose Lancelot* (1994, 176–77).⁷⁸ Incidentally, although the exact exemplar from which *Y Seint Greal* derives its *Perlesvaus* material is lost to us, Lloyd-Morgan (2001, 310–11, n. 44), drawing on Nitze and Jenkins (1932–37, ii,

⁷⁴ RG: <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/cy/ms-home.php?ms=Pen12>. For accounts of this trilingual manuscript, see: Marx (2015); O’Rourke (2003).

⁷⁵ RG: <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/cy/ms-home.php?ms=Crd3242>. See also Evans (1898–1910, ii, 318–20), Huws (2000, 60), and Owen (2009).

⁷⁶ RG: <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/cy/ms-home.php?ms=Pen11>.

⁷⁷ Lloyd-Morgan’s evidence lies in the kinds of mistakes Hywel makes and rectifies by adding relevant words in the margin or as superscript (e.g. pluralising, correcting verbs, inserting forgotten clauses, etc.).

⁷⁸ No manuscript of this Arthurian material survives, though Lloyd-Morgan does point to Dublin, Trinity College, MS 212 (copied c. 1400) as a manuscript of Welsh provenance containing a *Prose Lancelot* fragment: the manuscript contains annals relating to the southern border region of Wales for the period 1293–1349, and its *Prose Lancelot* fragment was once part of the volume’s cover.

3, 205–7), has noted that its nearest relative is Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 82, a thirteenth-century manuscript that was circulating in the Marches. It belonged to Brian fitz Alan who was based in the Welsh Borders in the 1280s, with Oswestry included among his family's possessions.

The third and final reference in Dafydd's *awdl* — to the *Ynyales* — might be corroborated by a number of manuscripts in the hands of the Red Book scribes. The first is Oxford, Jesus College 57, a manuscript produced at the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century (Huws 2000, 60), and which contains a version, in the hand of Hywel Fychan, of *Cyfraith Hywel Dda* (The Laws of Hywel Dda).⁷⁹ Christine James (1993, 31) reasonably speculates that it is to this manuscript that Dafydd's 'grym pob kyfreith ae gras' (l. 96) refers, thus confirming Melville Richards's suggestion in 1957 that Hopcyn ap Tomas commissioned Hywel to work on Jesus 57. The second manuscript — Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 32 — is one containing RB scribe C's work, and is also known as the *Llyfr Teg* (Fair Book) for the quality of RB scribe C's hand.⁸⁰ This manuscript contains the hands of five contemporary scribes: the bulk of the book is taken up by Red Book scribe C's copying of *Llyfr Iorwerth*, a version of *Cyfraith Hywel*. This is followed by works in other hands, including a Latin chronicle dating to 1404 concerning Cardiff and a copy of *Brut y Saesson* (Chronicle of the Saxons). The third manuscript to which the *Ynyales* may be referring is Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 19, another manuscript containing exclusively the hand of RB scribe C.⁸¹ Its contents include a series of historical texts in Welsh: *Ystorya Dared*; *Brut y Brenhinedd*; *Brut y Tywysogion*; and *Brut y Saesson*.

So concludes the list of manuscripts connectable to Dafydd's *awdl*, but there remain two more manuscripts that can be connected to Hopcyn's household. One is referenced in another *awdl* in the Red Book, this time by Ieuan Llwyd ab y Gargam.⁸² Ieuan's *awdl* makes reference to two texts, repeating Dafydd's reference to a *Lucidarius* (l. 54; *Ystorya Lucidar*), but also introducing a new reference to a *daeredd* (l. 54; *Ystorya Dared*, a translation of *De excidio Troiae historia* attributed to Dares Phrygius). This *daeredd* can be found in Hywel's hand in Philadelphia 8680.O, the manuscript of Hywel's famous colophon, alongside a copy, again in Hywel's hand, of *Brut y Brenhinedd*.

⁷⁹ RG: <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/cy/ms-home.php?ms=Jesus57>; *Early Manuscripts at Oxford*: <http://image.ox.ac.uk/show?collection=jesus&manuscript=ms57>.

⁸⁰ RG: <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/cy/ms-home.php?ms=Pen32>.

⁸¹ RG: <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/cy/ms-home.php?ms=Pen19>.

⁸² The text is edited in Daniel (2002, 107–19).

The final manuscript is Aberystwyth, NLW MS Llanstephan 4, locatable to Hopcyn's Glamorgan on the basis that it contains exclusively the hand of RB scribe C.⁸³ This manuscript contains a number of short texts including, notably, a fragment of the Welsh Bestiary based on Richard de Fournival's *Bestiaire d'amour* of c. 1245 (which we already encountered in the Ludlow scribe's Harley 273). Although there is no absolute proof, the inclusion in Llanstephan 4 of Richard's *Bestiaire* may lead us to speculate, as its most recent editor Graham C. G. Thomas does (1988, xviii), that the Welsh Bestiary might in fact have been translated at the behest of Hopcyn or his household. Thomas's stemma places the Llanstephan Bestiary fragment at only one remove from the original translation (xxv); it is, thus, tempting to consider that the original Welsh translation and perhaps also its French source, were still available in the Glamorgan region of Llanstephan 4's production.

Another point of interest in RB scribe C's work in Llanstephan 4 is their copying of a text known as *Claddedigaeth Arthur* (The Burial of Arthur), an Arthurian narrative from c. 1350–1400 based on Gerald of Wales' accounts of the exhumation of the supposed remains of Arthur and Guinevere in Glastonbury Abbey in 1190/1. In Llanstephan 4, the *Claddedigaeth* opens with a short fragment of an account of Arthur's coronation borrowed from a text known as *The Birth of Arthur*.⁸⁴ It is possible, as Lloyd-Morgan (2001, 164, n. 11) notes, that the two texts were compiled by the same redactor and were even once the same text. The presence of the *Birth* in Llanstephan 4 is significant, since it clearly draws on the *Prose Merlin*, thus suggesting (though not, admittedly, certifying) that the *Prose Merlin* may have been present in Hopcyn's Glamorgan. At the very least, it is clear that *Prose Merlin* material *had* been available somewhere in Wales and had made its way to Hopcyn's Glamorgan, either still in French or already in Welsh, by the time of the production of Llanstephan 4.

What all this evidence amounts to is an image of Hopcyn ap Tomas as an active promoter and consumer of secular and religious literary texts in Welsh, often translations from French. In his primary scribe, Hywel Fychan, we have an image of what is probably a secular, professional scrivener, whose work can be seen in a significant number of texts in what are now seven different manuscripts. However, there are yet more texts and manuscripts connectable to Hopcyn's wider household that further illustrate the investment of this Cambrophone Marcher milieu in French-language literary culture.

⁸³ RG: <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/cy/ms-home.php?ms=Llst4>.

⁸⁴ For this text, see Davies (1913, 250–58).

As we have seen, Brynley Roberts (1966–68) has argued that Rhys ap Tomas was the commissioner of Llanstephan 27, with its wide selection of religious materials copied in Hywel’s hand. Interestingly, the text of *Ystorya Adaf* preserved in Llanstephan 27 is, as Sarah Rowles (2006) has shown, not the Latin-based translation attested in other, earlier manuscripts (such as Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 14 [c. 1250–1300]); rather, the Llanstephan 27 *Ystorya Adaf* is an original translation based on an insular French *Vie d’Adam et Eve*.

Another text commissioned by Rhys is *Ffordd y Brawd Odrig*, a Welsh translation of the journeys of Brother Odoric of Pordenone around Asia from 1318 to c. 1329, written up via dictation in 1330 (O’Doherty 2009, 198–99). Its editor Stephen J. Williams (1929, xix–xxi) surmises that the Welsh text is a translation from a Latin source close to that of London, British Library, Royal 14 C XIII, from which Richard Hakluyt based his English translation in 1598–1600. The Welsh text is preserved in a single manuscript (Aberystwyth, NLW MS Llanstephan 2).⁸⁵ Its colophon states:

Ac uelly y teruyna *Siwrnei y Brawt Odoric* yn India; yr hwnn a drossawd Syre Davyd Bychein o Vorgannwc, o arch a damunet Rys ap Thomas vab Einynawn, y veystyr ef. (57)

And so ends the Journey of Brother Odoric in India, which Sir Dafydd Bychan of Morgannwg translated, at the request and wish of Rhys ap Thomas ab Einion, his master.

Although the colophon makes it clear that Rhys commissioned Dafydd to translate the source text, Llanstephan 2 is not Dafydd’s original manuscript: the Llanstephan 2 scribe identifies himself in a cipher as ‘Jbnkkn xbb dbykd xbb gryffyth’ (p. 276/f. 37), glossed in a later hand as ‘Jancyn vab Dvydd vab Gruffydd’.⁸⁶ Interestingly, the later scribe Jancyn was also working in Cwm Tawe. His hand also appears in Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 47iv and Aberystwyth NLW MS 5267B (*olim* Dingestow 7; also known as *Y Casgliad Brith*), dated, by a set of internal Latin annals, to 1438. In Jancyn, then, we have a scribe working only a few decades later than the RB scribes and in the same region as them, copying texts patronised by a member of the Tomas household and a number of others also copied by the RB scribes (Try 2015, 6–8, 196–202). It is possible, therefore, that Jancyn had access to the same libraries and reference works as the earlier RB scribes or even that he was apprenticed under them (Try 2015, 3–4). In any case, what Jancyn’s later activities *do* prove is that the importance of Glamorgan, and the Swansea valley in particular, as a site of textual and manuscript production continued well into the fifteenth century.

⁸⁵ All but pp. 344–49/fols 72–74 of Llanstephan 2 are in Jancyn’s hand.

⁸⁶ The cipher replaces vowels with the nearest following consonant; the same cipher is used in Oxford, Jesus College, MS 57, the Glamorgan manuscript containing Hywel’s copy of *Hywel Dda* (Richards 1957, xi).

Further textual networks proliferate in the transmission of these texts. As Daniel Huws (2003) points out, we can probably look to the ‘rhwydwaith Sistersaidd’ (23; Cistercian network) for the sources of the three historical texts copied by Red Book scribe A, and to Strata Florida in particular for a number of sources for the Red and White Books. Needless to say, a comprehensive account of the transmission of all the texts found in the manuscripts enumerated above is well beyond the scope of this chapter. I will therefore limit my discussion to the pertinent example of *Y Seint Greal*.

Y Seint Greal survives today not only in its original manuscript, Peniarth 11, but also in Aberystwyth, NLW MS Mostyn 3063E (*olim* Mostyn 184), a copy of Peniarth 11 made sometime after 1485.⁸⁷ A colophon in this manuscript states that:

Y copi kynttaf a ysgrivennod Mastir phylip dauyd o vnice lyfyr y vrddedic ewythr Trahaearn ab Ieuan ab Mauric. Ar llyfyr hwnn a beris syr rys vab th. esgrivennu ar y gost e hun. Henw yr ysgolhaic ae hysgrivennod. Gwilim vab John vab Gwilim vab Ieuan Vychan (...)

Master Philip Dafydd wrote the first copy from the only book (of this text) belonging to his honourable uncle Trahaearn ab Ieuan ab Mauric. This book Sir Rhys ap Tomas had written at his own cost. Name of the scholar that wrote it, Gwilim vab John vab Gwilim vab Ieuan Fychan (...)

In 1939 edition of the works of Guto'r Glyn, Ifor Williams identified the Trahaearn of this scribal note as Trahaearn ab Ieuan ap Meurig ap Hywel Gam, an *uchelwr* of Penrhos Fwrdios near Caerleon (1939, 362). In other words, Peniarth 11 must have somehow reached Trahaearn in Caerleon, possibly sometime after the death of Hopcyn ap Tomas in c. 1404 (Lloyd-Morgan 1978, 47–48). Furthermore, Guto'r Glyn (*fl.* 1445–75) refers to Peniarth 11 in a *cywydd* asking Trahaearn to lend his *Greal* to Dafydd, abbot of the Cistercian Abbey Valle Crucis.⁸⁸ From Cwm Tawe to Caerleon to Valle Crucis; involving *uchelwyr*, abbots, and poets: what we have here is an interesting glimpse into Marcher networks of circulation not only of manuscripts but also of *information* about manuscripts: as Lloyd-Morgan (2013, 221) points out, the abbot first had to *know* both that the text existed and that Trahaearn owned a copy of it.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ See NLW: <https://archives.library.wales/index.php/holy-grail>.

⁸⁸ On this *cywydd* reference, see Lloyd-Morgan (1978, 48–49; 2013, 220–22), Johnston (2013, 179–80), Fulton (2015a, 171–72). For the text, see Williams (1939), and *Guto'r Glyn.net*: <http://www.gutorglyn.net/gutorglyn/poem/?poem-selection=114&first-line=%23>.

⁸⁹ A similar glimpse is afforded by the case of *Ystoria Dared*, found in Philadelphia 8680.O (Hywel Fychan) and Peniarth 19 (RB scribe C). As Fulton (2015a, 164) notes, the production of a redaction of *Ystoria Dared* is also associated with Valle Crucis (where a copy of *Brut y Brenhinedd* is also likely to have been made). Yet, it is clear that *Ystoria Dared* somehow also made its way into these Glamorgan manuscripts. Incidentally, there is evidence that a manuscript (Exeter, Cathedral Library, MS 3514) of *Ystoria Dared*'s source, *De excidio Troiae historia*, was at least partially copied in Wales, probably in connection with the Cistercian monasteries of Whitland and Strata Florida. For an account of Exeter 3514, and an argument for the Welshness of its production, see Crick (2010, 31–33). See also Smith (2008, 84–85).

The final manuscript that deserves attention in this chapter is Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 50, a trilingual manuscript containing material in Welsh, Latin, and English.⁹⁰ Known since the early modern period as *Y Cwttā Cyfarwydd* (The Short Guide), Peniarth 50 is another Glamorgan manuscript, whose scribe Evans associated with Neath Abbey (Evans 1898–1903, i, 389). Written continuously from c. 1425–56, it dates, like Llanstephan 2 and Peniarth 47iv, to a few decades later than the RB scribes’ corpus. Still, it remains a key manuscript for any discussion of French-language literature in Wales and the March, not least because Rachel Bromwich (*TYP*, 226) has proven that one of its triads (Triad 86) draws on the *Prose Lancelot*. More importantly, Peniarth 50 is the earliest attestation of a popular short text known as *Darogan yr Olew Bendigaid* (Prophecy of the Blessed Oil), which opens with an account of Joseph of Arimathea bringing the oil to Britain where he uses it to bless King Arthur.⁹¹ The text currently exists in three versions, Peniarth 50 being the earliest attestation of version A. In fact, the Peniarth 50 scribe is probably also the *Darogan* redactor (Lloyd-Morgan 1981–82, 66–67, 79–81). Over the course of its short narrative, *Darogan yr Olew* draws on an array of French, Latin, and Welsh sources, including: *Y Seint Greal* (which draws on the *Queste* and *Perlesvaus*); John of Glastonbury’s Latin chronicle (which draws on *Perlesvaus*); and *Claddedigaeth Arthur* (whose opening *Birth* fragment, as we have seen, depends on the *Prose Merlin*).⁹² In terms of its *Seint Greal* material, the *Darogan*’s source is presumably Peniarth 11, which, if it had been lent out to Valle Crucis, was probably sent after the production of Peniarth 50 (which fits with Guto’s floruit of c. 1445–75), though we cannot rule out either the existence in Glamorgan of an intermediary *Seint Greal* manuscript, or the continuing presence of Old French Vulgate material. On the contrary, it is possible that the *Darogan* redactor drew directly on French-language Vulgate texts. We know that French material circulated in Glamorgan until late: Lewys Morgannwg (fl. 1525–53) had access to a manuscript of *Perlesvaus* (which he must also have been able to read), since his poem *Moliant Tomas ap Wiliam, Pen-rhos* (In Praise of Tomas ap Wiliam of Pen-rhos) includes details absent from *Y Seint Greal* (Lloyd-Morgan 2008, 168; 173, n. 40). A similar indication is made by the *Achau Arthuraidd*, Arthurian genealogies preserved in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuscripts (some with

⁹⁰ On this manuscript, see Evans, *Report* (1898–1903, i, 389–99), Huws (2000, 17, 61). For the increasing presence of English in Welsh manuscripts, see Marx, *Index of Middle English Prose* (1999, esp. xvii–xviii).

⁹¹ For the Peniarth 50 text (version A), see Evans (1981–82, 88–89).

⁹² James P. Carley (2001) suggests that a *Perlesvaus* fragment was kept alongside John’s chronicle in Glastonbury, where, Lloyd-Morgan (2001, 171) speculates, the Peniarth 50 scribe/*Darogan* redactor may have found the material.

Glamorgan connections).⁹³ As Lloyd-Morgan (1994, 175) puts it, the *Achau* ‘reveal consistent and direct borrowing’ from the *Estoire del Saint Graal*, the *Prose Merlin*, the *Prose Lancelot*, and the *Livre d’Artus*.⁹⁴ Clearly, half a century after Hopcyn’s heyday, the Glamorgan March was still marked by a distinctly multilingual climate and an up-to-date literary environment, in which a wide variety of French and French-derived sources were available.

It is clear that late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century Glamorgan was very much *au fait* with the French, Latin, and Welsh literature of its day. In particular, the poetry and praise poetry collected in the Red Book includes a wide selection of recent and contemporary works. Similarly, the Welsh adaptations commissioned by Hopcyn and Rhys indicate fairly rapid reception of — or at least on-going investment in — French-language literature, though they may, like Llywelyn Bren, have been reading such works in the source language for some time. *Ffordd y Brawd Odrig* appears within roughly 70 years of the journey itself. Given that we know that the Latin text had reached Norwich within 20 years of its composition, the text — if it came via insular channels — must have travelled from Norwich to Glamorgan and been rendered into Welsh within roughly 50 years.⁹⁵ Taking somewhat longer, the Welsh version of Richard’s *Bestiaire* (c. 1245) appears within roughly 150 years of the text’s original composition, as does the *Queste* (c. 1225–30) material of *Y Seint Greal*. The slightly older *Perlesvaus* material (c. 1200–10) takes most of two centuries, though still appears more than half a century ahead of any redaction in English. Hopcyn’s Glamorgan provides us, therefore, with another Marcher microcosm whose networks are multilingual, far-reaching, and admirably up to speed.

Conclusion

Each of the case studies of this chapter represents a snapshot of the vibrant and varied literary landscape that marked the Welsh Marches from the late twelfth to early fifteenth centuries. A cast of cosmopolitan figures serves to focalise discussion — people like Hue de Rotelande, Walter Map, the Ludlow scribe, and Hopcyn and Rhys ap Tomas. However, it is by tracing their various activities and

⁹³ For these texts, see Bartrum (1965). The MSS with Glamorgan connections are: Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 126, MS 143, and MS 178; Cardiff, Central Library MS 4.265 and MS 10. Cardiff 10 was copied by Dafydd Benwyn (1564–1634), a poet from Glamorgan, and Peniarth 143 is also a southern Welsh manuscript (see Lloyd-Morgan 1980, 337). For Peniarth 143, see Evans, *Report* (1898–1903, i, 901–2). For Cardiff 10, see Evans, *Report* (1898–1903, ii, 133–37).

⁹⁴ On these borrowings, see also Lloyd-Morgan (1980). For good discussions of Peniarth 50, see also Jones (2016; 2013, 128), Fulton (2015b).

⁹⁵ The earliest insular manuscripts of this text (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 407 and London, British Library, Royal 14 C XIII) are both marked by the ownership inscription of Simon Bozoun, prior of Norwich Cathedral Priory (1344–52). See O’Doherty (2009, 204), Ker (1985, 260).

connections that we might piece together a bigger picture of the Marches as eminently well-connected areas, where recent and current literary works from across England, Wales, and the Continent were circulated, consumed, and translated. As O'Rourke (2000, 216) remarks, manuscripts like Royal 12 C XII and Harley 2253 'demonstrate that the marches [*sic*], far from being a backwater, were a busy area of literary activity'.

These regions also emerge as literary environments that are innovative in their own right, active in their production of the 'matter of the March'. For Herefordshire, *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus* locate their own production to Credenhill, while *De nugis*, although composed elsewhere, is authored by a self-declared Marcher with strong Herefordshire connections, and features numerous items relating to the local area. In Ludlow, the authorial activities of the Ludlow scribe may be seen to include the prosified *Fouke*, the *Estoyres de la Bible*, *A Bok of Swevenyng*, sections of the English *Short Metrical Chronicle*, the Latin Lancaster Office, and possibly also the Latin prose lives of the local saints. Meanwhile, in Glamorgan, swathes of contemporary Welsh poetry are preserved in the Red Book, while the many Glamorgan translation projects represent cultural adaptations that also stand as independent literary works. Thus, from these three case studies alone, a wide, varied, and multilingual textual corpus begins to emerge, and the 'matter of the March' begins to take shape.

More than anything, this chapter has uncovered the participation of the Marches in the supralocal networks of French-language literary culture. Throughout these locales, French is used for a radically heterogeneous array of purposes, in a number of genres and forms. Herefordshire attests to the production of French-language hagiography, verse romance, philosophy, ecclesiastical chronicle, and Apocrypha. For Shropshire, we can do little better than quote Keith Busby (2015, 59–60), who writes that: 'Any notion of the West Midlands/Welsh marches area as culturally isolated necks of the woods is belied by some of the "classic" French texts included in (...) Harley 2253'. The works of the Ludlow scribe offer a rich selection of French-language texts, encompassing ancestral prose romance, bestiary material, calendars, love lyric, fabliau, misogynistic verse, pilgrimage guides, religious prose narrative, lament poetry, paint recipes, medical writings, and legal plaint. Meanwhile other Harley texts, notably *Kyng Horn*, represent vernacular English translations of French sources. Finally, for Glamorgan, the Red Book contains numerous items that are translations of French works long since known in Wales, while contemporary translation projects — witness the translations of the *Queste*, *Perlesvaus*, *Vie d'Adam et Eve*, and probably also the *Bestiaire d'amour* — also testify to the Tomas household's

continued investment in French-language literature, as does the evidence for the presence of the *Estoire*, *Prose Merlin*, *Prose Lancelot*, *Livre d'Artus*, and probably also the *Mort*. Meanwhile, the possible connections of Cardiff 3.242 to Hopcyn's Glamorgan may provide a rare instance (though in reality they were surely commonplace) of a French-speaking Welsh scribe working trilingually across Welsh, Latin, and French.

In a sense, the literary presence of French in the March may seem unsurprising. Yet, as we have seen, the Marches show proof of fairly *rapid* reception of insular and continental French material, indicating the presence of highly active and up-to-date networks of textual transmission and circulation. It is possible, for instance, that Hue de Rotelande in Credenhill was playing with romance conventions popularised by Chrétien de Troyes in Champagne within a decade. Several items in Harley 2253 provide evidence of Ludlow's participation in highly contemporary networks of transmission across England and the March of very recently composed lyric material. Similarly, the inclusion in the Red Book of highly recent poetic works, alongside the commissioned translation projects, shows Hopcyn's Glamorgan to have been highly up to date in literary terms. To put Glamorgan's precocity into perspective: for a *Queste*-based narrative in their own vernacular, English-speakers would have to wait for Malory approximately 85 years later than *Y Seint Greal*. Similarly, for an English-language version of Odoric's travel narrative, English-speakers would need to content themselves with Latin and French redactions until Hakluyt's translation in 1598–1600, nearly 200 years after Rhys's commissioning of the Welsh text. In short, the Tomases were very much, as Christine James (1993, 20) puts it, 'ar flaen y ffasiwn' (at the forefront of the fashion).

A final point to draw from this chapter is the insight it has offered us into lay literacy. The importance of monastic networks for textual production in Wales and the March is, of course, undeniable; in this chapter alone, we have encountered the Welsh and Marcher Cistercian abbeys of Margam, Whitland, Strata Florida, Buildwas, Neath, and Valle Crucis, as well as abbeys elsewhere in Sawley, Whalley, Rushen, and Furness. Similarly, the importance of Hereford Cathedral and Wigmore Abbey for local literary production can hardly be underestimated. However, the majority of the manuscripts encountered here are not directly associated with religious foundations and scriptoria. Instead, they offer a valuable insight into secular literary networks, and show that lay people, from middle-class merchants to upper-class nobles, were clearly invested in these highly multilingual, local literary microcultures and their place in far-reaching and up-to-date textual networks.

It is possible that, even after the above discussion, the sceptical reader might contend that the Marches remain at best unexceptional in terms of cultural activity. Yet, even a concession as slight as that is resonant and meaningful in the face of the dominant literary-historical model that has for so long deprived regions like the March of their cultural agency. Indeed, if this chapter has succeeded in nothing more than demonstrating that Marcher cultural activity is merely *in line* with other ‘central’ regions of the British Isles, then it has succeeded in at least one of its aims: it has proven that the Marches were not a ‘peripheral’ cultural backwater, but a well-connected literary world that was perfectly *au courant*.

Still, I hope that this chapter achieved something more, namely that it has more fundamentally called into question the model that generates such ascriptions of peripherality in the first place. I have argued elsewhere that networks as a historiographical model provide ‘a useful way of narrativising these interlocking histories transversally, without merely replicating the core-periphery hierarchy of Anglo-centric histories’ (Lampitt 2017, 72). This chapter has, I hope, shown that the same might be said of networks as a *literary*-historiographical model, one that might more accurately and ethically delineate the textual networks that traverse, transect, and ultimately transcend the core-periphery.

2. Reading Networks

The previous chapter looked at the networks of the March from a literary-historical perspective; but what of the texts themselves? How do *they* represent their local environment? To what extent is this networked literary world bodied forth in the diegetic worlds of the texts themselves? The purpose of this chapter is to formulate some answers to these questions by analysing the representations of networks in the textual corpus itself. In other words, I now wish to shift my optic of analysis from literary history to literary criticism in order to formulate new readings of these Marcher texts. How, exactly, might network theory help here?

I noted in the Introduction (§2B) that, with ANT, we cannot simply zoom back and forth from the local to the global, since ‘the social is a certain type of circulation that can travel endlessly *without* ever encountering either the micro-level (...) or the macro-level’ (1999, 19). In *Reassembling the Social*, the binary is further deconstructed. For Latour, in order to ‘keep the social flat’ the ANT analyst must perform two moves: the first is to ‘localize the global’; the second is to ‘redistribute the local’. What this means, practically, is that the overarching ‘global’ must be deconstructed into the sum of its parts, i.e. ‘flattened out’ into a transversal network of plural locals. There is no ‘global’, just as there is no ‘big, reassuring pot of glue’: there are only networks of connecting, dis-connecting, and re-connecting local sites.

For Latour, this logic has political potential, and it is worth returning at this point to Latour’s notes on ANT’s political epistemology in the conclusion to *Reassembling the Social*:

Is it not obvious then that only a skein of weak ties, of constructed, artificial, assignable, accountable, and surprising connections is the only way to begin contemplating any kind of fight? I think it would be much safer to claim that action is possible only in a territory that has been opened up, flattened out, and cut down to size (...) (2005, 252)

It is worth underlining, however, that this remodelling of hegemonic power as a flat network has a logical corollary: an account of counter- or non-hegemonic power as an equally networked phenomenon. In other words, if theories like the *network society* and ANT reveal power as networked, they thus facilitate two counter-hegemonic critical moves. First is the one described in the above quotation: to transform hegemonic power into a phenomenon that is locally sited, materially connected, and thus contestable. The second, however, is to transform non-hegemonic power into a phenomenon that is equally locally sited, materially connected, and thus *able to contest*.

It is my intention in this chapter to interrogate the extent to which this logic can be seen as operative in my textual corpus: to what extent might we locate within these ‘peripheral’ textual cultures representations of their own networks? To what extent might such representations indicate those cultures’ contestation of hegemonic power’s very status as hegemonic? Thus, in this chapter, I aim to push further the notion of ‘network’, which I explore here not only as a useful noun-descriptor for real-world historical and literary-historical connections, but also as a critical methodology, a mode of reading, a transitive verb-form.

Let us make a brief analogy with, for instance, queer theory. Just as one might queer a text by tracing its representations of non-heteronormative sexual desires and non-binary gender identities, so might one network it by tracing its representations of its own place in polycentric, multidirectional networks. Just as queer readings seek to sensitise us to non-heteronormative possibilities in texts, so networked ones might sensitise readers to textual representations of mobility, travel, connections, and the networks that they thereby form and reform. Finally, just as queer readings run against the grain of both modern and medieval heteronormativity, so do networked ones run against that of the dominant core-peripheral perspectives of both medieval and modern political hegemonies. In other words, literary critics might identify the ways in which our texts can be seen to overlap with the analytic moves of ANT, in which they ‘localise the global’ and ‘redistribute the local’, and we might interpret the political implications of such moves.

It is precisely this kind of ‘networking’ or ‘networked reading’ that I now wish to perform in relation to the texts from my three case studies in the medieval Welsh Marches, asking: do these texts represent static geographies that corroborate their own peripherality, as dictated by the universalised perspective of the core, hegemonic power? Or do they conjure up worlds of constantly assembling and reassembling networks, of connections being made, unmade, and remade? What, moreover, might be the implications of such worlds, both for readings of those texts’ own politics and for wider understandings of insular political and cultural geographies?

2.1. *A Herefort, e ces estaus*: Hereford, c. 1180–c. 1210

The texts of Hue de Rotelande depict a remarkably interconnected world, in which highly mobile protagonists hail from various lands and travel to numerous others, sustaining networks of contacts dispersed across Europe and North Africa. Throughout, the political geography of Hue’s twelfth-

century world is superimposed on that of the antique world that forms the setting of his texts. The truly global perspective of these texts is announced almost immediately in *Ipomedon* by its opening plot device: the young duchess of Calabria known only as La Fiere (the Proud One) declares her refusal to marry any man but the one most accomplished at arms (ll. 119–32). Her declaration is one that rapidly spreads across Europe:

Mult esteit de li grant parlance
De Lombardie desqe en France,
E par Burgoine e par Peitou
E par Naverne e par Anjou,
Par Loereine e par Hungrie,
Par Flaundres e par Normandie,
Par Engleterre e par Bretagne,
Par Russie e par Alemaigne (ll. 143–50)

There was much talk about her from Lombardy to France, throughout Burgundy, Poitou, Navarre, Anjou, Lorraine, Hungary, Flanders, Normandy, England, Brittany, Russia, and Germany.

In other words, the *renomee* (l. 142; renown) of La Fiere rapidly travels along various pan-European networks of information circulation, presumably encompassing aristocratic ones, though not restricted to them: the opening nominal formulation avoids specifying its agents. More to the point, within 150 lines this text from the supposedly ‘peripheral’ Welsh Marches has announced itself as a truly *European* romance, whose spatio-political frame of reference stretches at least from Navarre to Russia.

This frame of reference and its complex interconnections remain in place throughout the romance: the tourney episode, which takes up about a third of the narrative, is a useful case in point. Under pressure from her barons to take a husband, La Fiere resolves to delay her decision by announcing a tourney, the winner of which she will marry, in compliance with her vow to marry only the greatest man at arms. Thus, secular leaders from across Europe converge upon Calabria to win the hand of La Fiere. The lists include three principle suitors: the princes of Russia and Ireland and a Norman Duke, Nestor. They are joined by a Breton Count, a Spanish Duke, the Danish King, the German King, the Scottish King, a Flemish Count, and the King of Lorraine. Several of these figures are already interconnected. Antenor, the Spanish duke, has already been aided by the deceitful Calabrian nobleman Amfion (ll. 3419–20), whom *Ipomedon* eventually kills (l. 3804). Monesteus, the Irish prince, was raised as the ward of Meleager, King of Sicily, and knighted by him (ll. 3333–36), suggesting a relationship of non-consanguineous cousinship between Monesteus and La Fiere. Similarly, Daires, a king of Lorraine, and Ismeon, the German King, are — Hue tells us in a terrible pun — *cusins germains* (l. 4048). They are, more specifically, brothers-in-law: Daires is the brother of

Atreus, the King of France, and inherited Lorraine via marriage. Some kind of relationship also exists between the Russian prince and Dirceus, the Count of Flanders, who for some unknown reason leads all the Russian knights into battle (ll. 3451–55). Drias, the Calabrian vassal to La Fiere, and Candor, a vassal to the Irish Prince, are also brothers, though the former unknowingly kills the latter (ll. 5993–6088). Finally, it is not until late in *Ipomedon*'s sequel, *Protheselaus*, that we learn that the Sicilian Melander is half-Spanish, was raised in Spain, and is related to Encalides as first cousins (*enfantz frarus*) (ll. 11937–46).

As Latour (2005) reminds us, the social only exists insofar as it is *in association*, the group only exists insofar as the elements that form it are constantly brought into contact: ‘if you stop making and remaking groups, you stop having groups’ (35). This might strike us as an eminently useful way of thinking about medieval public events such as tourneys and feasts: it is an especially apt way of conceptualising this particular episode, one of the tourney’s earliest literary manifestations. La Fiere’s tourney provides a *point de rassemblement* for interconnected political networks that spread across Europe, a site where these protagonists reconnect, and where their interaction transforms the geopolitical map. Amfion’s death, for example, leaves Drias as one of the most powerful barons of Calabria (ll. 4848–54), though when Drias retires from the narrative after killing Candor, Amfion’s land is redistributed at the romance’s *dénouement* to Egeon (ll. 10527–28). Similarly, the geopolitical landscape is reshaped when Ismeon flees before Capaneus, with the narrator stating that: ‘N’ert mes veü en la cuntré, | Il la nus ad quite clamé’ (ll. 4005–6; He was never seen again in the land; he quitclaimed it to us).

These networks of political contacts spread even further across Europe in *Protheselaus*, nowhere more so than in the text’s climactic sequence. In order to rescue the imprisoned Protheselaus from the Pucele de l’Isle, a geographically diverse network of allies mobilises itself: Matan, son of a Burgundian Duke, makes for Denmark to inform King Theseus (ll. 7272–73), while Jubar, son of a French Baron, goes to Crete in search of Melander (ll. 7281–83). The character known only as the hermit, who is exceptionally well connected for a man of his lifestyle, first seeks the help of Ismeine in Burgundy (l. 7263), then heads to Rhodes to find Jason (l. 7295), then to Puglia to rouse Dardanus of Otranto (ll. 7304–5), before simply travelling ‘(...) de païs en païs, / La u il sot ses bons amis’ (ll. 7319–20; [...] from country to country where he knew his good friends to be). Led by Medea (ll. 7905–8), the allies are also joined by the *Blois Chevalier* and the *Salvage Pucele* of Lombardy (ll. 7941–43),

whom Protheselaus had encountered earlier in his adventures. In response, the Pucele de l'Isle activates her own network of sympathisers, mainly via her familial and romantic ties: these include her *cusin germain* (l. 8677), Laertes of Saxony, lord of Cologne and owner of many castles in Burgundy (ll. 8673–80), the duke of Russia, who has long desired her hand (ll. 9799–803), and Pentalis (l. 7900).

In other words, these texts are distinctly marked by a pan-European interconnectivity that, rather than positing a core in relation to various peripheries, portrays all these locations as interlinked in political, aristocratic, diplomatic, and familial networks. Yet, for all that it depicts a pan-European geography, *Ipomedon* is also layered with references to Hue's local world. These include references to personages such as 'Huge de Hungrie' (l. 5520), a canon of Hereford, and the famous Walter Map (ll. 7185–86). 'Herefort, e ces estaus' (Hereford and its market stalls) also appear at line 5348, where townspeople chat about the 1174 siege of Rouen. As a point of comparison to the evil Leander, there is a reference to 'uns reis gualeis' (ll. 8941–42; a Welsh king) named Ris: this is possibly Rhys ap Gruffudd, who marshalled resistance to Norman presence in South Wales from 1155 to 1197, raiding in 'Herefort e Gloucestre, | Salopesbure e Wirecestre' (ll. 8945–46; Hereford and Gloucester, Shrewsbury and Worcester). Finally, *Ipomedon*'s epilogue concludes the text in Hue's Marcher setting by sharing the location of Hue's own house at Credenhill, a peculiarly intimate piece of information: 'A Credehulle a ma meisun' (l. 10571; at Credenhill at my house). Credenhill is foregrounded in the very syntax of this line, integrating the particular and the universal, the micro and the macro: most people have a house; a house can be practically anywhere; but Hue's is at Credenhill. Indeed, Hue's own name, appearing five times in *Ipomedon* (ll. 33, 7176, 10552, 10553, 10561), three times with the toponym (ll. 33, 10553, 10561), itself layers his text with another set of local Marcher references, this time to Rhuddlan. Finally, the epilogue to *Protheselaus* identifies Gilbert fitz Baderon of Monmouth as its patron.¹

The previous chapter noted some of these references as useful dating and localising markers, but they also have a literary function and effect, texturing the verse with a local identity even as its world-view spans most of western Eurasia. For example, the townsfolk's gossiping about the siege in

¹ *Protheselaus* contains nothing like the level of density of local references as *Ipomedon* due to its manuscript transmission. The local references in *Ipomedon* only occur in the Cotton manuscript, which, it will be recalled, does not preserve *Protheselaus*. They are omitted from both the *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus* texts of Egerton 2515, possibly because, as explained in Chapter 1, the manuscript may have been produced in early fourteenth-century London, where audiences (and the scribe) may not have been familiar with specific references to local places and people long since deceased. None of this is to say, however, that the original *Protheselaus* of Hue was lacking in local references: it seems to me reasonable to suppose that it may once have contained a level similar to that of its prequel.

Rouen reveals and depicts local interest in — and the availability of — news of continental Angevin affairs. Even in this passing reference, Hereford appears with its *estaus* (market stalls), thus foregrounding the city's status as a market town connected to networks circulating goods and information. Even this seemingly unremarkable passage thus marks Hereford out as a politically and economically connected centre. Yet, by more widely inserting such local references as comparisons, digressions, and authorial asides throughout his romance, Hue localises the global and flattens out the territory both spatially and temporally: peppering his text with proper nouns, Hue embeds the people and geography of the twelfth-century March in the wide-ranging networks of the classical world described by the narrative.

A case might be made for seeing a similar dynamic at work in Walter Map's *De nugis Curialium*. Following Geoffrey Shepherd's assertion in 1979 that *De nugis* is 'a book about stories and their status' (57), a number of critics have underlined the parodic, ironic, self-conscious nature of *De nugis* and explored its various modalities: for Siân Echard (1996), *De nugis* is essentially a metafiction marked by Walter's self-reflexive commentaries on writing; for Monika Otter (1996, 123–28), the text functions as a self-referential parodic work by referring to the possibility of the author's own untruthfulness; and for Robert Levine (1988) the text is a playful, fantastical, deliberately self-trivialising text that 'offers playfully bitter misogyny, satire and complaint, with deliberately grotesque fantasies of impotence, castration, necrophilia, and decapitation' (105). Similarly, Robert R. Edwards (2007) proposes that *De nugis* is informed by 'the assertion of authorship within and against the framework of court culture' (275), an assertion that the text also reflexively self-critiques. Recently, Stephen Gordon (2015) has explored Map's satirising of the court, and his meta-satirising of his own literary exercise, in relation to the images of the walking dead in *distinctio* 2.

As Otter (1996) notes, this self-trivialising, self-critiquing, self-problematising programme of *De nugis* 'almost of necessity breed[s] the loose collection of short tales as its most appropriate narrative expression' (120). Indeed, opinion varies widely among manuscript and literary critics over the origins of *De nugis*, over the development of its structure and organisation, and over the extent to which its current form represents its author's intentions. A number of earlier critics comment on the fragmentary, half-edited state of *De nugis* and on the incompetence of the later scribe (Hinton 1917, 93; Brooke and Mynors 1983, xxxii; Otter 1996, 112). Other critics have underlined certain thematic or formal sequences of materials that indicate at least a partial effort by Walter to arrange his material

(Wood 1985, 103; Echard 1996, 298–99; Faletra 2014, 74–83; Cooper 2011). However, the most up-to-date account is provided by Smith (2017), who convincingly argues that the *distinctiones* of *De nugis* represent five separate works in progress: *distinctio* I, a careful revision of material from *distinctiones* 4 and 5 (42–59), is primarily composed of satirical writings (76); *distinctio* 2 ‘contains the deeds of prodigious men, both sacred and secular’ (76); *distinctio* 3 ‘contains four refined romances’ (76); *distinctio* 4 begins with the *Dissuasio Valerii* and ‘contains more folktales and a good deal of supernatural stories’ (77); and *distinctio* 5 contains draft material and a recent pseudohistory of England. Thus, each *distinctio* can be said to form an internally coherent, if unfinished unit that may or may not have been conceived of as constituent parts of a single five-part work.

Yet, important as it is, this philological focus on authorial intention somewhat risks missing the point: the fact is that the structure of the text *as we have it* — and, indeed, as the Bodley 851 scribes had it — has the literary *effect* of connecting, juxtaposing, and intertwining textual materials whose origins, settings, and cultural referents are highly heterogeneous. In fact, whatever the intended order of the *distinctiones*, this dynamic would be largely true of *De nugis* at any point in its development. As a kind of narrative miscellany, it is based on the principle of juxtaposition, free from the requirement to narrativise the links between its materials.²

Juliet Wood (1985) has done much work to identify the origins of a number of the tales in *De nugis*, many of which hail from various regions of Europe, and which Map may have encountered first-hand on his own travels, second-hand from other travellers, or third-hand from written sources. The tale of Nicholas Pipe, for example, is of Sicilian origin (possibly encountered first hand on Walter’s documented travels to Italy), while the tale of the Whirlpool of Saturnalia reveals an influence of Greek and Slavic cultures in his inclusion of the motif of the cobbler of Constantinople (99). Other tales betray Map’s familiarity with crusade narratives: Wood notes that the revenant tale (ii.29) stems from the pseudo-Turpin chronicle, and that William of Tyre provides the tales of the Sultan’s Son (i.21) and of the Old Man of the Mountain (i.22) (99). Similarly, she conjectures that the tale of Hameric may derive from oral accounts of pilgrims or crusaders (100). Walter’s work is also replete with reworkings of classical and patristic texts.³ *De nugis* is thus a culturally heterogeneous confection with a distinctly international world-view, weaving tales of various origins, drawn from various sources, and set in

² As Smith (2017, 51–52) notes, ‘(...) most of the *De nugis curialium* progresses steadily in an artful, leisurely manner, with Walter linking stories together with quick transitions’.

³ For example, on Walter’s use of Cicero’s *De officiis*, see Bychkov (1995). On his use of Augustine, St. Paul, and Boethius in i.I, see Smith (2017, 46–47).

various locations across Europe and the Levant. Yet, as Wood also points out (100), much of Walter's material remains local to the Welsh border, and is revealing of the high extent to which Welsh and other Celtic cultures permeated the region. *De nugis* includes, for instance, examples of the Fairy Mistress story-type in the tales of Gwestin Gwestiniog (ii.11) and Eadric the Wild (ii.12), as well as two Welsh saints' legends, Elias (ii.9) and Cadoc (ii.10).⁴

One of the better-studied narratives of *De nugis*, *De Herla rege* (i.11), concerns ancient British history. One of the earliest tales of the ghostly hunt, this text recounts how the British King Herla is approached by a pygmy-like half-goat king, who strikes a bargain with him: he tells Herla he will soon be married, and promises to attend the wedding in return for Herla's attendance at the pygmy's own a year later. Herla agrees and the pygmy and his people attend Herla's wedding to the Frankish princess, bringing great opulence to the occasion. A year later Herla fulfils his part of the bargain. However, on emerging from the pygmy's realm, carrying the gift of the pygmy's hound, he discovers that he has been taken out of his time, and that his land has been overrun by Saxons. It is explained that, until the pygmy's hound jumps to the ground, Herla's company cannot touch the earth without disintegrating into dust, thus forcing them into an eternal wandering. According to Walter, Herla and his band were last seen 'multis Wallensibus immergi iuxta Waiam Herefordie flumen' (i.11, 30; by many Welshmen to plunge into the Wye, the river of Hereford[shire]), in the first year of King Henry's coronation (1133).

Rather than segueing smoothly into the next tale of the Herlethingus, this narrative is instead followed directly by an otherwise unconnected one concerning the king of Portugal (i.12). The next reference to Herla does not occur until Chapter 13 of *distinctio* 4: 'Hec huius Herlethingi uisa est ultimo familia in marchia Walliarum et Herefordie' (iv.13, 370: This household of Herlethingus was last seen in the march of Wales and of Hereford). The philological reasoning behind this gap may well be that *De Herla rege* i.11 is a later revision and expansion of iv.13 (Schwieterman 2010, 31; Smith 2017, 42–59, 83–105). The literary *effect*, however, is to disperse the Herlethingus references across the *distinctiones* of *De nugis* and the folios of Bodley 851, forming a kind of textual and codicological intra-network in which the text refers back (and forwards) to its own tales. Moreover, this second reference is embedded in a tale (retroactively) entitled *De Nicholao Pipe homine equoreo* (iv.13), a

⁴ The Eadric narrative also has local political significance: as Smith (2018) notes, Walter inserts an Anglo-Saxon thane to an earlier story in order to bolster Hereford Cathedral's claim to Lydbury North, which would effectively make the bishop a Marcher lord.

Sicilian tale of the merman Nicholas Pipe, a tale that also refers to herds of floating goats in Le Mans and to night-time *prede* (iv.13, 370; booty/game) in Brittany. The textual sequence surrounding *De Nicholao* is worth outlining: iv.10 is a tale about Lydbury North, Herefordshire; iv.11 takes us to Reims for the tale of the Gerbert (Pope Sylvester II); iv.12 transports us to Constantinople; and, after iv.13's interlude in Sicily, France, Brittany, and Hereford, iv.14 takes us back to ancient Rome for the tale of Salius.

This is but one snapshot of textual sequencing in the *De nugis* that may, as we have seen, be interpreted in light of the narratives' thematic links, or read as little more than an unfinished muddle. Either way, the effect of this sequencing is to juxtapose and connect by textual, associative, and codicological proximity local Marcher narratives with tales from and about locations much further afield. Put differently, *De nugis* 'flattens out the territory' in its very textual and codicological structure, linking local narratives with materials from other localities across Europe not in any hierarchical order, but in a transversal network of juxtaposition and cross-referentiality.

Furthermore, the networking enacted by the text is arguably also re-enacted in texts like *De Herla* on the level of the narrative itself. *De Herla rege* has been read by Jean-Claude Schmitt (1984) as an example of Map's support of the Angevin court: its evocation of an ancient British king serves to 'ancrer la légitimité du roi angevin dans l'histoire bretonne, tout en privant celle-ci de sa charge subversive' (506; anchor the legitimacy of the Angevin king in British history, all the while depriving the latter of its subversive charge). Patrick Schwieterman (2010, 31) also sees a pro-Angevin position in the text, which he reads as an illustration of Henry II's reassertion of control in Wales and the Marches. Following Walter's characterisation of Henry II as a latter-day Herla — 'tanquam nobis suos tradiderint errores' (i.11, 30; as if they had transmitted their wanderings to us) — Faletra (2014) reads the fairy-king 'as a way of highlighting the utter contingency of the royal court' (78–79), as if Henry II were also 'the victim of the trickery of an ancient pygmy-king' (78). Similarly, Helaine Newstead (1971) sees the diabolic aspect of the pygmy king as part of Walter's satire on Henry's hellish court.

It seems to me, however, that *De Herla rege* wholly fails to provide a history of Saxon oppression that might resonate in the twelfth-century as legitimising Angevin hegemony, even in an ironic mode. On the contrary, the transitions from British to Saxon to Norman rule are necessarily absent from the narrative. What we *do* have in *Herla*, however, is a history of the Britons' connections and networks. Although she does not discuss *De nugis*, Sylvia Huot (2008, 238) has suggested that

figures of fairies in medieval literature represent ways of thinking through contemporary political questions concerning alterity, of ‘probing both the dangers and the delights of cross-cultural and inter-ethnic contact’.⁵ This is a useful way of approaching Walter’s fairy, who is encoded as a cultural and religious other. For example, his appearance is compared to that of the pagan god Pan, while the reference to the fawn-skin (*nebris*) designates the skins worn by Bacchanals during Bacchic festivities, and is linked to the Maenad followers of Dionysus.⁶ Similarly, when attending Herla’s wedding, the fairy brings with him pavilions and an array of luxurious goods:

prosilunt ab eisdem ministri cum uasis ex lapidibus preciosis et integris et artificio non imitabili compactis, regiam et papiliones implent aurea uel lapidea suppellectile, nichil in argento uel ligno propinant uel apponunt (i.11, 26)

out of these [pavilions] rushed servants with vessels each made, by some inimitable artifice, of a single precious stone; [they] filled the royal tent and the pavilions with utensils of gold and jewels; they served nothing in silver or wood.

The opulence of the fairy king serves to heighten his otherworldliness, but it also performs an exoticising function, casting him as a cultural other. His material wealth also points to his participation in the transcontinental networks of trade in such luxury goods.

Another connection represented in *De Herla rege* is a British–Frankish one in the shape of Herla’s marriage to the Frankish princess. Herla’s Frankish queen is easily incorporated into his personal and political lives: almost touchingly, Herla’s first thought on emerging from the cliff is to re-join his wife, for when he meets the Saxon shepherd, he is ‘petens de regina sua rumores’ (i.11, 28; desiring news of his queen). Similarly, we might wonder how seriously we are to take the fairy king’s claim that Herla is ‘closely connected to myself [i.e. the fairy] in place and descent’ (i.13, 26; *loco michi proximus et sanguine*). Is there another kind of connection between the British king and this otherworldly figure? And how does he know of the Frankish ambassadors’ imminent arrival and of Herla’s impending marriage, even before Herla himself? Is it purely magical omniscience, or are there more specific networks of information circulation by which the fairy procures such knowledge?

Not only, then, is the fairy meeting itself figured as a cross-cultural encounter of the British King with the othered fairy, but that encounter itself precipitates a series of other cross-cultural encounters for Herla, firstly with the Frankish ambassadors and princess, then with the Saxon shepherd,

⁵ Schwieterman (2010, esp. 21–27) analyses the pygmy king as a fairy figure, and reads the visit to his court as a journey to the fairy otherworld.

⁶ *Lewis and Short*, f., 1. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=nebride&la=la-lexicon>. It is not made clear in the text that Herla is Christian; his status as king ‘antiquissimorum Britonum’ (i.11, 26; of the most ancient Britons) perhaps suggests a pre-Roman Britain. In either case, the fairy’s connections to Greek and Roman Paganism would be perceived as alternative to Herla’s own religion.

and finally, though the narrative does not describe it, with the Norman invaders. As Huot suggests of fairies elsewhere, the pygmy-king here functions as a figure for negotiating fantasies and anxieties over cross-cultural contact, which, in Huot's terms, is figured as both 'delightful' (Herla's marriage to the princess) and 'dangerous' (the loss of Herla's kingdom to the Saxons and Normans).

In his readings of *De nugis*, Faletra (2014) warns against resuscitating Walter as a 'Welsh sympathizer or patriot' (77). I would agree: as discussed in the Introduction and Chapter 1, the identifications of Walter and many border dwellers with Wales are strategic and variable. Yet, as Faletra also rightly states: 'Wales cannot for Map simply stand as a barbarized periphery in binary opposition to the civilized centrality of the court' (2014, 79). Indeed, *De Herla rege* depicts an interconnected past Britain that resonates with the ways in which *De nugis* itself interconnects the narratives of Wales and the March. Fittingly, *De Herla rege* itself is not from among the Celtic narratives drawn from Walter's Marcher culture; rather its inclusion in *distinctio* 1 points to Walter's continental connections.⁷

Just as Herla's Britain is connected to the Frankish and fairy realms, so too are Wales and the March connected by the positioning of the *Herla* narrative to tales of Sicily, Brittany, Portugal, Reims, and even ancient Rome. In short, far from presenting his homeland as a political or cultural 'periphery', *De nugis* both describes and performs the networks of the Herefordian March, which it connects and interconnects on the level of textual organisation, codicological context, and narrative itself.

2.2. 'je su marchaunt de Grece': Ludlow, c. 1310–c. 1350

The works of the Ludlow scribe provide fertile ground for this networked mode of reading. Of course, attributing any coherent political programme to 'the scribe' may seem a somewhat hazardous move, since the Ludlow scribe cannot be — and, as we have seen, was not always — the sole agent of these texts' procurement, composition, copying, or compilation. It is not possible, therefore, for him to constitute the sole agent behind the counter-hegemonic, antiroyalist politics that, I will argue, so many of his works promote. Thus, where Catherine A. Rock (2008, 2–4) considers the Ludlow scribe as fulfilling Foucault's author-function, it is more helpful for my purposes to frame the issue of author subjectivity less in Foucauldian terms than in Barthesian ones. The premise of my argument here is that

⁷ See Smith (2017, 86–103), who shows that the Herla narrative 'does not in fact derive from Welsh or Celtic folklore but is a continental tale outfitted in Celtic garb' (87).

the author ascription performs a primarily spatialising function, locating a corpus of texts and manuscripts in order to read them as communicating less the politics of one author-subject, than of a wider locality — a move that allows the ‘author’ to remain dead.

Indeed, after Chapter 1’s outlining of the Ludlow scribe’s local patron-audience networks, we might even consider his works to be particularly well placed to body forth the political climate of his region, one that was marked by its resistance to the contemporary hegemonic power. As is well known, Roger Mortimer, 1st Earl of March, within whose jurisdiction the Ludlow scribe was living and working, led a dogged opposition to Edward II and his Despenser favourites, eventually ousting them altogether in 1327. Even after then, Mortimer’s own heyday lasted for only three years: he was executed in November 1330 on the orders of Edward III, who also ordered the confiscation of the Mortimer holdings and the abeyance of their titles. Even beyond the political machinations of its rulers, there are numerous other points on which the Shropshire March opposed the interventions of centralised hegemony, be they political, jurisdictional, or fiscal.

My argument in this section, then, is not that the Ludlow scribe’s works are *essentially* different from other contemporary insular works — as we have seen, several of the lyrics in Harley 2253 were also circulating elsewhere in Britain and Europe at the same time. Rather, my suggestion is that it makes a difference to read them and the worlds they depict in light of their circulation in the Marches and its attendant political climate. Like *De nugis*, *Ipomedon*, and *Protheselaus*, a number of the scribe’s works network his locale across a decidedly non-Anglocentric geography in ways that, given the fraught nature of the region’s relationship with the ruling hegemony, can and ought to be read as politically resonant.⁸

Let us begin with *Fouke*. The almost picaresque tale of a noble-turned-outlaw hero, *Fouke* is a text fully in keeping with the political conditions of its production. Ralph Hanna (2011, 355) has pointed out how the production and reproductions of the *Fouke* story coincide tellingly with times of conflict between the English Crown and the aristocracy: the original 1270s poem emerges at the time of the Barons’ War with Henry III, and the English translation of the 1380s is contemporaneous with

⁸ My argument here, particularly where it concerns the Harley Lyrics, may seem to resemble that of Daniel Birkholz (2009), who argues — I believe, rightly — that the Harley lyrics are marked by a simultaneous localism and cosmopolitanism (185). Our stances diverge, however, on several key points. I do not, for example, read the presence of localism and cosmopolitanism as couched in erotic terms within Harley 2253’s love-lyrics, nor do I make such close links with the Hereford clergy as the texts’ transmitters and addressees. Nor, crucially, do I see the Harley lyrics as the expression of ‘world-weary’ (198) and ‘down-home’ (210) clerics nostalgically longing for their home (Birkholz 2015): this image of a quiet idyll away from the cosmopolitan world treads dangerously closely to the core-periphery model from which Birkholz ostensibly seeks to depart.

the struggle between the Lords Appellant and Richard II. This royal–baronial friction is eminently true of the 1320s prose *Fouke*, composed and circulated at the height of the rebellion of Roger Mortimer. Indeed, Matthew Fisher (2012, 144–45) has suggested that the break in the Ludlow scribe’s copying of *Fouke* between *c.* 1325–27 and *c.* 1333–35 (i.e. precisely the period of Mortimer’s rebellion, ascendance, and downfall) may have been due to its politically incendiary nature. As a narrative of antiroyalist Marcher rebellion, *Fouke* may have been a bit close to the bone.

What is clear is that, in tandem with its antiroyal political programme, *Fouke* promulgates a truly global world-view. Via the travels of its principle family, the Marcher locations of Alberbury, Ludlow, and Whittington are connected in this romance to power centres throughout North Wales and England, as well as to locations in Spain, France, the Maghreb, and the North Sea. In order to gain an idea of the complexity of *Fouke*’s crisscrossing of Britain and Europe, one need only attempt to chart visually the many journeys undertaken by the outlaw band and connected protagonists (see Appendix 4).

Yet, alongside these various travels and the networks of contacts that they engender, the romance is sure to anchor itself in a distinct sense of place in the Shropshire March. The text begins with an extended history of the Fitz Waryn family, beginning with the unidentifiable family ancestor Warin de Metz, before going on to detail the struggles of his descendants, describing in depth Fulk II’s border disputes with Iorwerth Drwyndwn (Iorwerth ap Owain Gwynedd). Ludlow looms large in this early section of the narrative, given Fulk II’s marriage to Hawise de Dynan, daughter of Josce de Dynan, the wealthy lord of Ludlow. A description of Ludlow’s founding appears early in the narrative: ‘Cesti Joce fist fere desouth la ville de Dynan un pount de pere e chaus outre la ryvere de Temede, en le haut chemyn qe va parmy la marche, e de Cestre desqe Brustut’ (4, ll. 12–14; This Joce had made below the town of Ludlow a bridge of stone and lime built across the river Teme to the main road that runs through the March, from Chester to Bristol). From its very inception, Ludlow is a connected site, linked by bridge, river, and road to the length of the Welsh borderlands and beyond.

This sense of place is reasserted later in the text too. As the text’s editors note (Hathaway et al 1975, xxx–xxxi), the section narrating *Fouke*’s time in Wales lasts for approximately one eighth of the whole text, and provides a particularly dense series of toponyms, eighteen in all, that stretch from the western edge of Staffordshire, through northern Shropshire and Powys to Bala in Penllyn. While, as the editors suggest, this may indicate a specific origin for this section of text, the rhetorical effect of this

topographic density is to enrich further the romance's sense of place in the Shropshire March. The text is pervaded by a geography whose power lies less in its accuracy or textual origin than in its rhetoric, in its topographical repetition.

Moreover, it is by mobilising his networks across this non-Anglocentric geography that Fouke is able to bring to fruition his rebellion against the king. Nowhere is this truer than in the Welsh section, when Fouke has entered into open rebellion against King John. After trips to other Celtic Marches in Scotland and Brittany, Fouke and his companions make for Rhuddlan in order to speak to a 'sire Lewys' (33, l. 27), the fictional avatar of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (d. 1240). Fouke then heads to Welshpool, to the court of Powys Wenwynwyn, since his next mission is to broker peace between Lewys and Gwenwynwyn ab Owain Cyfeiliog. The three leaders then gather their troops at Bala Castle and triumph in battle against the king's men at 'le Gué Gymele' (35, l. 9; the Ford of Gymele).⁹ Here, Fouke and his Welsh allies triumph over the king: Llywelyn restores Whittington to Fouke and further bestows on him the commotes of Ystrad Marchell, near Gwenwynwyn's Welshpool, and Dinorben, near Llywelyn's own Rhuddlan. The proximity of these endowments to the Welsh leaders' own lands marks a consolidation of the leaders' alliance, and embeds Fouke in the political sphere of north-eastern Wales. Later, this connection is further cemented by intermarriage, when Fouke's daughter Eve marries Llywelyn.

Fouke's account of Fulk III's relationship with native Welsh lords is a tendentious one that bears little resemblance to reality. However, rather than positivistically dismiss the text as unreliable history, it might be more productive to interrogate the politics operative in the text's representations of Fouke's Welsh networks. Throughout *Fouke*, the Welsh emerge as Marcher allies precisely due to their shared opposition to the English crown, a point pertinent not only to Fouke's rebellion against John, but also to Mortimer's rebellion against Edward. It is, therefore, politically expedient for the Ludlow scribe to steep the fourteenth-century alliance of Marcher and Welsh interests in a history that conveniently smooths over the highly factional Marcher-Welsh politics of the early thirteenth century.

⁹ In 1961, Glanville Price identified *gué* as a mistranslation of Middle Welsh *ford* (road), and argues that Gué Gymele is actually Ffordd Gam Elen, a Roman road that crosses the Dee around seven miles downstream from Bala, and that also offers a route via river tributaries from Bala to Shrewsbury. Another possibility for Gymele's location could be Cymer, home to a Cistercian Abbey, near the confluence of the rivers Wnion and Mawddach, near Dolgellau, 38 miles to the north west of Welshpool and eighteen miles to the south west of Bala. The abbey had known connections to Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, who leased its lands for twelve years. There might also be linguistic support for this option: Cymer in its lenited form would have appeared as Gymer, a frequent occurrence given the soft mutation required by common prepositions like *i* (to) and *o* (from). Similarly, the final /r/ to /l/ transformation may be due to the volatility of liquid consonants. I thank Prof Paul Russell for pointing this possibility out to me.

Moreover, it is a history from which Fouke emerges as intimately connected to leaders in other centres throughout North Wales in the realms of Powys and Gwynedd: it is precisely Fouke's relationships with these Welsh centres that enable him to engage and endure hostilities against the king himself.

It is not only to the noble households of Wales that Fouke's family is connected. Marriage and familial networks feature prominently in this text. Glyn Burgess (2000, 90–91) counts allusions to eleven marriages, several of them linking the Fitz Waryn dynasty to Welsh, Marcher, and English noble families. Similarly, Emma Cavell (2010) has underlined, in strikingly network-like terms, the importance of landed women and heiresses to Fouke, arguing that women 'function as nodes on the grid of feudal and geographical inter-connection courted by the narrative's hero' (101). Equally, the lords of England and the March are all imagined not only as interrelated, but as related to Fouke himself. During the discussion of the royalist lords, the Norman Sir James declares that no English lord will apprehend Fouke because 'a poi tous les grantz, sunt cosyns a sire Fouke' (50, l. 17; almost all the lords are cousins to Sir Fouke). The Earl of Chester's only rebuttal is that it is not just the *grantz* who are related to Fouke, but also the King himself: 'tous les grantz e le rey meismes est cosyn al dit Fouke' (50, ll. 23–24; all the lords and the king himself are cousin to the said Fouke). When sent to attack Fouke and his men, Chester first begs Fouke to reconcile with the king, personally promising him safe-conduct (52). Even when Fouke refuses and Chester is forced to engage battle, he afterwards spares the life of Fouke's brother William, as Fouke had entreated him, and has him nursed in a nearby abbey, earning himself the wrath of the king in doing so (52). In both *Fouke* and Fouke, then, we have a literary representation of the densely interconnected aristocratic networks of the English and Marcher nobility. Moreover, this network ultimately saves the life of Fouke's brother in another instance of a border lord (here Chester) disobeying royal authority.

Perhaps the most remarkable example of Fouke's mobilisation of his networks occurs in the episode directly following his adventures in Muslim Spain and the Maghreb. After settling the dispute between Ydoyne, duchess of Cartagena, and Messobrins, king of Barbary, the company return to England, where Fouke sends one of his men in disguise to the court of King John in an attempt to rescue his brother, William. Having already deceived the king in the disguise of an Ethiopian minstrel (37–38), Johan de Raunpayne, whom we first meet in Alberbury in Shropshire (32, l. 13), is particularly well suited to the task, and so sets sail up the Thames disguised as a Greek merchant. He lodges in great style at the mayor's house, and is taken to see the king, to whom he declares:

‘je su marchaunt de Grece; si ay esté en Babiloyne, Alixandre e Ynde le Majour, e ay un nef chargé de avoir de pois, riche dras, perye, chevaux, e autres richesses qe grantement purreint valer a ceste reigne.’ (56, ll. 21–24)

‘I am a merchant from Greece; I have been to Babylon [Old Cairo], Alexandria and Greater India, and I have a ship filled with goods, costly cloths, precious stones, horses, and other riches that could greatly benefit this realm.’

Johan’s company have, in truth, only been to Murcia and Tunisia, but it is clear that Johan’s cover story — believed as it is by all — is more of an exaggeration of the truth, or a credible alternative to it, than an outright lie. The passage plays on very real networks of trade in luxury goods, and having already portrayed its protagonists’ extensive travels, this is a fully plausible story within the geographic economy of the romance.

Furthermore, it is by these network links that King John is so evidently seduced, since, when he meets the merchant, he can barely be accommodating enough. In his search for further trade, he cleverly — or so he thinks — extends an invitation to the merchant: “‘Je vueil,” fet le roy, “que vous *e vos bien* aryvez en ma terre”” (56, ll. 24–25, my emphasis). We have two ways of reading this statement. In one, *vos* might be read as a possessive pronoun (meaning *you and yours*), referring to the merchant’s family and, indeed, his friends, colleagues, and coveted contacts.¹⁰ In this case, *bien* must be read as an adverb, meaning *well, safely, easily*.¹¹ Alternatively, we might read *vos* as a possessive adjective and *bien* as a plural noun signifying *goods*.¹² Thus, the king’s words might be translated in two ways: ‘I wish that you and yours arrive safely in my lands’ or ‘I wish that you and your goods might come to my lands’.¹³

It must not be forgotten, moreover, that the very purpose of Johan’s fiction is to gain access to the king’s quarters in order to rescue William fitz Waryn, Fouke’s imprisoned brother. This is an undercover op, a rescue mission, a sting. It is precisely by representing himself as well connected, by offering to link England’s capital into his persona’s cross-continental commercial networks, that Johan de Raunpayne successfully subverts the hegemonic power and deceives the very king himself.

In a recent article, Emily Dolmans (2016) argues that *Fouke* bodies forth a distinct kind of British insularism. She argues that, while Fouke travels easily between England, Wales, and Scotland,

¹⁰ *AND*, ‘vostre’ pr.poss. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/vostre>.

¹¹ *AND*, ‘bien’ adv. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/bien>.

¹² *AND*, ‘bien’ s. pl. 2. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/bien>; *AND*, ‘vostre’, a.poss. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/vostre>.

¹³ Both readings have problems. In the first, the definite article is missing from the locution *les voz*, and in the second, the noun *bien* is missing its pluralising *s*. Still, the Ludlow scribe’s French is frequently atypical in its grammar (for example, in this very line *aryvez* should be in the subjunctive). I would opt for the second translation as more accurate, but the ambiguity is revealing.

his sea travel ‘outlines Britain as a discrete unit’ (130). But Fouke does not circumnavigate Britain in any such coherent sense; he yoyos between Britain and the continent, heading to France, to Scandinavia, to Spain. *Fouke* traces travels and trajectories whose effect is quite the *opposite* of sealing Britain off. Furthermore, the world of *Fouke* in no way revolves around anything that might resemble the ‘core’ of English power in London or anywhere else — at one point, he travels directly from Rhuddlan to Paris with no mention of London at all. Instead, this is a world of variously interconnected centres in which connections are constantly made and remade in networks to which the Shropshire March, its rulers, and their followers are linked. It is a world, moreover, that subversively exceeds, outstrips, and subverts the power of King John (for Fouke), Henry III (for the *Fouke* poet), and Edwards the II and III (for the Ludlow Scribe).

A number of texts included in Harley 2253 strongly support the thesis that this region was active and invested in global networks of contact and travel. Take, for example, *The Flemish Insurrection* (art. 48), which celebrates the Flemish victory over the French in an insurrection headed by the cloth-weaver Peter de Conyng. The poem points directly, as Revard (2000, 28–29) suggests, to Ludlow’s important connections to the international wool trade. The Shropshire March’s engagement with other networks such as those of crusading and pilgrimage are made clear in the inclusion of texts like *Les pelrinages communes* (art. 38) and *Les pardouns d’Acre* (art. 39).¹⁴ The scribe’s interest in eastern geography emerges again in *L’enquete que le patriarche de Jerusalem fist* (art. 95), which describes Phoenicia, encompassing locations in modern-day Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, and Egypt.

Just as texts like *Ipomedon*, *Protheselaus*, *De nugis*, and *Fouke* so deftly interweave the March and the wider world, so too do texts in Harley 2253 ground themselves in a sense of place rooted in the local environment. Take, for example, *Annot and John* (art. 28). Playing on networks of travel and trade in luxury goods, the poet compares his lady to a series of precious stones (ll. 1–10), herbs, and plants (ll. 11–20), birds (ll. 21–30), and spices (ll. 31–40). However, as Birkholz (2015, 195–96) notes, this is no placeless, timeless love lyric; these far-travelled commodities are situated firmly in the Marcher region, with the poet singing that ‘From Weye he is wisest into Wyrhale’ (l. 27; She is wisest from the Wye to the Wirral). We might equally look to Jonathan Hsy’s astute reading of

¹⁴ The first is a kind of descriptive map that details distances on routes from Acre along the length of Israel and Lebanon, proceeding southwards to Jerusalem and back northwards to Beirut. The second is a kind of tourist guide to the Holy Land, listing shrines and holy sites that ought to be visited.

the trilingual (Latin, French, English) *Dum ludis floribus* (art. 55) (2013, 58–64). By juxtaposing localised language (e.g. insular French orthography, West Midland dialectal forms) with erratic code-switching, references to on-the-go writing (*in tabulis*), and the speaker's claim to be composing in Paris, *Dum ludis floribus* creates, for Hsy, 'a mobile persona' (62). For Hsy, the text not only conjures up 'the disruptive, tumultuous qualities of love itself, but it also constructs the fiction of a disoriented, traveling speaker' (62).

Although the lyrics mentioned above are not politically charged in themselves, it is worth noting that they are compiled alongside material of a more political bent. Take, for example, *The Song of Trailbaston* (art. 80; composed 1305–1307, southwest England).¹⁵ In this poem, the singer, a Fouke-like outlaw forced to live in the woods, rails against both secular and religious authority. He complains of his wasted years serving the king (l. 28), and claims that 'Pur ce valt plus ov moi a bois demorer | Q'en prisone le evesque fyergé gyser' (ll. 65–66; This is why it is better to live with me in the forest than to lie shackled in the bishop's prison). The threats he makes to the Justices Spigurnel and Belflour — who are, after all, representatives of the king — are remarkably violent: 'E lur bruseroy l'eschyne e le cropoun | Les bras e les jaunbes – ce serreit resoun! – | La langue lur tondroy, e la bouche ensoun!' (ll. 38–40; I would break their spines and haunches, their arms and legs – that would be justice! – I would cut out their tongues, and their mouths too!). Finally, the poem's *envoi* describes itself as written on parchment and thrown onto the highway (*gitté en haut chemyn* [l. 100]), a format in which outlaws pleaded innocence or registered complaint (Fein 2015a, iii, 323; Scase 2007, 42–48, 173).

Other examples include two poems concerning the Second Barons' War in quire 6/booklet 4. The first, *A Song of Lewes* (art. 23), is the earliest surviving *sirventes* in English, and is an antiroyalist anthem that delights in the baronial victory over Richard, earl of Cornwall, at Lewes on 14 May 1264. Trumpeting the deeds of Simon de Montfort, further targets for the singer's scorn include a young Edward I (ll. 57–63), John de Warenne (ll. 33–37, 41–45), and Hugh Bigot (ll. 50–53). Prince Richard, second son of King John, is referred to as 'Richard of Alemaigne' (l. 9) or 'kyng of Alemaigne' (l. 2, 17, 25), which since 1257 he had been. However, the repetition of this title at the head of the first four stanzas seems to overlay even this factual reference with a tone of contempt. Similarly, the poem's refrain, repeated after each of the seven stanzas, takes on a bawdy, disdainful quality: 'Richard | Thah thou be ever trichard, | Tricchen shalt thou nevermore!' (Richard, though you are forever a traitor,

¹⁵ On this poem, see Aspin (1953, 67–68); Revard (2000, 75–76; 2005a, 151–55); Scattergood (2000, 185–88); Fein (2015a, iii, 323);

never more will you betray!). Fein (2015a, ii, 382) describes this short, repetitive refrain as a ‘rowdy’ one that calls others to join in the song deriding ‘Richard the Trichard’, while Scattergood (2000, 180) notes that this rhyme for Richard’s name was a widespread one. Henry III is only ever referred to metonymically as ‘Wyndesore’ (l. 13, 21, 29, 37, 53), which Fein reads as the poet’s sparing of Henry from scorn, while Richard is accused of ‘thievery, debauchery, oath-breaking, and cowardice’ (2015a, ii, 382). Yet, this refusal to name the king six times in such a scathingly anti-establishment song must be understood as part of its political agenda. In this context, *Wyndesore* is, for Harley 2253’s Marcher audiences, a place that marks political interests as at odds with their own as those of *Alemaigne*.

A particular cause for disagreement in *A Song of Lewes* is royal taxation. The first stanza recounts — in a rather incredulous tone set by the interjection ‘bi mi leaute’ (l. 2; by my honour) — that the King of Germany has demanded ‘thritti thousent pound’ (l. 3; thirty thousand pounds). This financial grievance continues into the second stanza, where the singer laments how ‘He [Richard] spende al is tresour opon swyvyng’ (l. 10; He spent all his treasure on whoring), and reappears in stanza five when Warenne is accused of robbing England to pay Richard for the love of Henry (ll. 35–37). Finally, in the penultimate stanza, we are told that, if Simon de Montfort were to have Bigot in his hands, ‘Al he shulde quite here tuelfmoneth scot’ (l. 51; He should repay in full their twelvemonth’s royal tax).

The financial grievances of *A Song of Lewes* serve to situate the poem in a thematic thread — one might say intra-network — that runs throughout Harley 2253 of poems whose criticism of hegemonic power is motivated by fiscal injustice. These include *The Flemish Insurrection* (art. 48) mentioned above, *The Song of the Husbandman* (art. 31), and *Satire on the Revenues of the Great* (art. 88). Wendy Scase (2005) considers these last two as a literary voicing of peasant plaint, though in the context of Harley 2253 their criticism of the reigning hegemony is surely as powered by regionalist concerns as by those relating to social class. Richard Newhauser (2000) adds to this list *Satire on the Consistory Courts* (art. 40) and *The Man in the Moon* (art. 81), though he is right to point out that all of these lyrics ‘differ widely in their objects and methods of attack’ (205). We might also add to this group *Against the King’s Taxes* (art. 114), whose own particular ‘method of attack’ I analyse in Chapter 4. Thus, in its form, technique, and manuscript context *A Song of Lewes* makes for a rabble-rousing snub to royal authority.

Positioned directly alongside *A Song of Lewes* is another poem concerning the Second Barons' War, the *Lament for Simon de Montfort* (art. 24). As Fein (2015a, ii, 385) notes, these two lyrics function as a diptych, facing each other on verso and recto, possibly suggesting a coherent plan for this section of the manuscript. Revard (2007) argues that the metanarrative for this quire is a warning against earthly pride: it features this 'diptych of triumph and tragedy' (109), framed by the religious texts that open and close the booklet. Fein (2015a, ii, 385) similarly argues that the *Lament*, paired with the following multilingual trio of 'dust to dust' lyrics, and the inclusion of *The Execution of Simon Fraser* (art. 25), suggest that the Ludlow scribe's primary aim is to 'issue a warning on earthly pride'.¹⁶

Yet, the *Lament* is not an abstractly moralistic reminder of human folly; it recounts the fall of a specific leader and bewails the implications of his loss for the baronial cause. The structure of the poem revolves around a repeated refrain, which, like *A Song of Lewes*, evokes the image — and possibility — of collective singing. With the rhyming structure of AABCCB, this refrain is fairly lengthy (half the size of each stanza), and, repeated nine times, dominates most of the song as a powerful and potentially mnemonic rhetorical device. Indeed, these aspects of the poem might support Hugh Shields' (1972) argument that the poem was composed very soon after the Battle of Evesham as a piece voicing the 'popular reaction' (206) to the event, rather than a later political document. No mere moralistic condemnation of vanity, the *Lament* looks much more like a poetic vehicle for collective mourning of the baronial leader.

Another political thread running through the *Lament* is its comparison of Montfort's death with the martyrdom of Thomas Becket: 'Come ly martyr | de Caunterbyr | [Montfort] finist sa vie' (ll. 40–42; Like the martyr of Canterbury, [Monfort] ended his life). The poet later writes that Montfort, like Becket, was wearing a hair shirt when he died (ll. 93). Although Montfort was never officially sainted, many people in England did call for canonisation; Fein (2015a, ii, 385) suggests that the *Lament* might be understood as a part of that call. Moreover, as Fein also suggests, there is a political point made in conjuring up this particular martyr as one who, like Montfort, 'fought for Holy Church against royal impieties' (2015a, ii, 385). The Becket affair was perhaps the largest stain on Henry II's political career, a cause for his personal humiliation, as well as for considerable civil unrest. The

¹⁶ Critics have made much of the inclusion in booklet 4 of *The Execution of Simon Fraser* (art. 25), a poem celebrating the public execution in 1306 of the Scottish rebel Simon Fraser, dated by Scattergood (2000, 174) to the autumn of that year. Yet, this poem's inclusion does not necessarily confirm the scribe's commitment to English nationalism, or his belief in 'the state's ultimate power in quelling uprisings and unrest' (Fein 2015a, ii, 388). In fact, the inclusion of this poem and its violent baying for Scottish blood might just as well function as a critical exposition of English brutality in the face of popular uprisings, or as an example of the fate that rebels like Simon de Montfort, Roger Mortimer, and Fulk III risked in opposing the ruling hegemony.

Lament in the context of Harley 2253 thus reflects three moments of popular antiroyalism: first, against Henry II in 1170 in the allusion to the Becket affair; secondly, against Henry III in 1264–67, fighting whom the mourned Montfort fell; and thirdly, against Edwards II and III in the contemporary Mortimer rebellion and its fall-out.

My final example in this subsection is *Kyng Horn* (art. 70), one of the lengthiest texts in Harley 2253. The geography of *Kyng Horn* is an especially hazy one: Horn's homeland is *Sudenne*, also called *Eastnesse* (l. 954); Aylmer's kingdom is *Westnesse* and Thurston's kingdom is Ireland. Local audiences of Harley 2253, as John J. Thompson (2007, 125–26) has pointed out, would hardly have been unfamiliar with Ireland, given local families' considerable holdings there. As we noted in Chapter 1, the Ludlow scribes' works also have various Irish connections. Given the real-world location of Ireland, it is tempting to find a real-world equivalent for *Westnesse*, and Fein (2015a, ii, 449) suggests the Wirral in Cheshire. However, if *Westnesse* can be taken to signify western regions that are not Ireland, then surely our best options are western England, the Marches, and Wales. Given the location of the scribe and his audiences in Ludlow, it is possible that they might have understood by *Westnesse* more or less their own region, as Fein goes on to suggest (499). More importantly, however, if *Westnesse* can be said to include or designate the Welsh Marches in this way, then it is this region that provides the setting for the majority of the action: *Westnesse* is where Horn grows up in Aylmer's care, receives his education, and falls in love. It is, in other words, key both to the narrative and to the identity of the principle protagonist.

It is highly telling that throughout *Kyng Horn* the chief catalyst for propelling both the narrative and Horn's travels onwards is the repeated failure of kings. Although praised as a 'gode kyng' (l. 4) at the beginning of the romance, Horn's father, King Allof, goes riding with only two companions — a mistake that leads to the destruction of his kingdom and the exile of his son.¹⁷ King Aylmer, Horn's acting stepfather, similarly fails in his duties: he exiles Horn on the evil counsel of Fykenild. Another unsuccessful king is Mody: at the end of the romance, the company travel to his hitherto unmentioned lands and Horn slays him in order to instate Athelbrus, Aylmer's steward. Finally, King Thurston, although Horn's ally, succeeds in sending both of his sons to their deaths, and remains entirely affable when Horn reveals his true identity after six years of living at his court as his heir presumptive, and breaks his engagement to marry Thurston's daughter. This acquiescence works

¹⁷ Rather like King John in *Fouke*, when he first sees the Saracen ships, Allof expects trade: 'He askede whet hue sohten | Other on is lond brohten' (ll. 43–44; He asked what they sought or what they brought to his land).

in favour of our hero, but Thurston's somewhat pathetic answer to Horn's revelations shows little of sensible leadership: "Horn, do al thi wille" (l. 1010; Horn, do all your will). In other words, even as Horn's travels criss-cross and connect *Eastnesse* (England?), *Westnesse* (Wales and the March?), and Ireland, the text formulates a critical commentary on kingship.

Most Harley Lyric scholars have remained staunchly determined to read an emergent English nationalism in(to) these earliest of Middle English lyrics.¹⁸ However, scholars like Marilyn Corrie (2003, 77) and Derek Pearsall (2001, 16–17) have warned against projecting English nationalism onto the period 1290–1340, and critics like Corrie (2003, 77), Birkholz (2009, 225), and O'Rourke (2005, 50) in particular point out that Harley 2253 does not uphold this nationalist thesis. Complementing this work, Harley 2253 emerges from these networked readings as a codex that juxtaposes and interweaves its global perspective with texts that communicate a programme of local, regionalist politics largely at odds with the hegemonic, 'national' power. In more extended texts like *Horn* and *Fouke*, the politicisation of networking can also be read on a narrative level. In other words, these works' spatio-political referents are charted on a local/global axis, and not in reference — or deference — to a national framework or nationalist agenda. The works of the Ludlow scribe thus body forth a microculture presenting itself not as the western periphery of an English power to which it is assimilable, but positions itself in a global geography even as it questions, mocks, and resists that power.

2.3. *Marsiandwyr a delont y'r wlat honno*: Cwm Tawe, c. 1380–c. 1410

The Red Book of Hergest has been described by Helen Fulton (2015b, 339) as marked by a 'deliberate antiquarianism' in contrast to the 'modern manuscript' that is Peniarth 50. An unfavourable comparison of the Red Book to Peniarth 50 is also made by Aled Llion Jones (2016, 144) on account of

¹⁸ Thorlac Turville-Petre (1996) was quick to locate — or project — English nationalism onto Harley 2253. He writes that the 'national sentiments expressed in the historical poems are anti-French and anti-Scottish' (196), and that, while the poems 'confine themselves to a limited geographical range (...) It is the anthologist, in the act of collecting and transcribing the lyrics, who presents them as fitting representations of national culture' (217). John Scattergood (2000) acknowledges several of the poems' criticism of the king, their suspicion of royal power and its representatives, their resistance to unfair taxation, their resentment of political centralisation, and their privileging of local interests over any kind of nationalism. Yet he still feels it necessary — and possible — to assert that the compilation embodies 'a generally nationalist set of ideas, a sense of England the nation, and the poems are generally favorable to the king (...) nobody who set forth these sentiments would have thought of himself as anything other than a loyal Englishman' (168–69). Susanna Fein, whose editorial work on Harley 2253 has been groundbreaking, acknowledges the scribe's sympathies for the baronial cause and his opposition to 'corrupt officialdom and unreasonable taxation' (2015a, i, 10); yet, she is quick to explain these leanings away as clerical, Franciscan, or regional, so determined is she to cast the scribe as 'patriotic toward nation and king' (10).

the Red Book's monolingualism and its containing 'only half a dozen pieces of *darogan*' (prophecy). Similarly, Hopcyn ap Tomas is characterised by Rees Davies ([1995] 2001, 55) as a 'conservative, who drew his inspiration from the past'. Daniel Huws (2000) also refers to the inclusion in the Red Book of a large group of late *gogynfeirdd* and the 'gaping absence' of early *cywyddwyr* as evidence that 'Hopcyn was conservative in taste' (82).

Yet, if the world of the Ludlow scribe was politically marked by the Mortimer rebellion, then the activities of the Red Book scribes were taking place at a no less tumultuous time. As noted in the Introduction, the literary milieu of Hopcyn's Cwm Tawe overlapped with the Glyndŵr rebellion. As Davies notes, Hopcyn ap Tomas was consulted by Owain Glyndŵr in Carmarthen at the height of the rebellion in 1403: Owain sought out Hopcyn's expertise as a 'master of Brut' (master of prophecy) in order to know what his future held in store.¹⁹ Similarly, in Hywel's Philadelphia colophon, the scribe writes how the Welsh continue to suffer 'poen ac achenocit ac alltuded yn eu ganedic dayar' (fol. 68; pain and deprivation and exile in their native land). This is not to say that Hopcyn and Hywel were key movers in the Glyndŵr rebellion, but these connections cannot be overlooked.

Thus, my argument in this section will be that, just as the Ludlow scribe's works might be productively read in light of their local political climate, so too might the cultural products of Hopcyn's Glamorgan be read anew in light of theirs. More specifically, I argue that it is in these works' representations of global, non-Anglocentric networks, and of their locality's participation in those networks, that a political positioning is at stake.

The Red Book, in many ways, materialises the local/global network dynamic that I have been outlining in this chapter. Of course, the manuscript's local credentials are incontrovertible. As we saw in the previous chapter, it preserves a great deal of contemporary poetry from across Wales, though poems in praise of Hopcyn and Rhys are of closer local origin, probably deriving from direct contact or acquaintance with the two patrons. Similarly, the inclusion of native tales means the pages of the book are populated — sometimes, as we will see, densely — with the proper nouns of Welsh protagonists and places. Yet, many of the volume's texts also transport us to lands much further afield. *Ystoria Carolo Magno*, for example, opens with Charlemagne pursuing the North African Prince Aigolant across the Mediterranean; the narrative of the *Pererindod Siarlymaen* takes us to Jerusalem and

¹⁹ See Ellis (1827), as cited in Davies ([1995] 2001, 159–60). See also Davies ([1987] 2000b, 449; 2002, 79), Fulton (2005), Kay ([2006] 2010).

Constantinople; and *Cân Rolant* transports us to Muslim Spain.²⁰ The inclusion in the Red Book of the cosmological-geographical tract *Delw y Byd* — a Welsh redaction of Book I of Honorius Augustodunensis's early twelfth-century *Imago Mundi* — is also indicative of the global programme of the Red Book.²¹

Like *De nugis* in Bodley 851 and the texts of Harley 2253, the Red Book inscribes its local world by, alongside, and within other contexts across the known world, flattening out the global across its very folios into a network of interconnected localities. Moreover, there are a number of ways in which the Red Book's connecting of its local environment into global networks also functions on a textual level. It is to these that we now turn.

A particularly rich example might be found in perhaps the most famous texts of medieval Welsh literature, the *Mabinogi*. Surviving only in the White Book of Rhydderch (c. 1350) and the Red Book of Hergest, little is known of the date or location of the *Mabinogi*'s original composition. The most common supposition is that they were initially oral tales drawing on Celtic mythological traditions, though there is still debate concerning the date and location of their being committed to written narrative.²² In any case, Jon Kenneth Williams (2008) has argued that the relations of these Welsh tales to their contemporary societies can be more fully explored if we move away from a mythological mode of reading the *Mabinogi* to a synchronic one, taking the view that they 'are more — or are at least as much — about the age in which they were produced as they are about prior eras' (175). And not only produced, but also reproduced, copied, circulated, and consumed. Indeed, the circulation of these narratives in a post-1066 and post-1282 world must surely be read as politically loaded — especially, I

²⁰ As Natalia Petrovskaja (2015, 102) notes the itinerary of Charlemagne's 'pilgrimage' to Jerusalem in the *Pererindod* differs significantly from that in the *Pelerinage*, reflecting Welsh familiarity with the most recent developments in crusade and pilgrimage itineraries via new sea routes that had become available by the time of the later Welsh text. For example, the Welsh text has the company depart for Jerusalem directly from Italy (which corresponds to routes of the Third Crusade) while the French text sees them travel further over land to Greece before taking the sea route to Jerusalem (mirroring the routes of the First Crusade). See also Reijhon (2005, esp. 834, n. 12).

²¹ We have already witnessed Welsh reception of Honorius's *Elucidarium* (see Ch 1, §3), but Welsh reception of the *Imago mundi* also shows Wales to be in line with wider European trends. Other vernacular versions include French (Gautier de Metz's *Image du monde* [c. 1245]), Castilian (*Semeiança del mundo* [13th c.]), Italian (*L'Ymagine del mondo*), and eventually, in 1481, English (Caxton's *Mirroure of the World*, based on the French version). See Petrovskaja (2013).

²² Ifor Williams (1951, xli) suggested a date of around 1060, with internal *Triad* references added later. Arguing for the influence of French and Anglo-Norman literature on the tales, Morgan Watkin (1962) suggested a date in the early to mid-thirteenth century. Saunders Lewis's various articles (1967; 1969a; 1969b; 1970) suggested a date in the 1170s or 1180s based on apparent parallels with events during Henry II's reign (such as Matholwch's reception of Bendigeidfran in *Branwen* and the Irish kings' reception of Henry II after his invasion in 1171). Thomas Charles-Edwards (1970–71, 298) disagreed, suggesting sometime between 1050 and 1120. Andrew Breeze (1997a, esp. 75–79; 1997b), meanwhile, boldly identifies the *Mabinogi* composer as Gruffudd ap Cynan's daughter, Gwenllïan (d. 1136). For fuller discussion of the various datings of *Branwen* (and of the *Mabinogi*), see Sims-Williams (2011, 188–191, 208–210).

suggest, given the anti-Anglocentric geographies that they represent. In other words, in the context of late fourteenth-century Glamorgan, we might identify a political claim in the *Mabinogi*'s very geotemporal setting, namely that of a pre-Norman, pre-Saxon, pre-Roman British Isles under native British rule 'with the English and Normans rarely mentioned, because to acknowledge their presence would be to destroy the illusion of unified autonomy' (Fulton 2011a, 169).

Those pre-conquest Isles are consistently depicted as (inter)connected ones populated by mobile protagonists. Take, for instance, Pwyll's travels to Annwfn, allying Dyfed with the Otherworld. Or the numerous references to the itinerancy of the rulers of the various Welsh *cantrefi*.²³ Or the first section of *Math*, in which Math and his retinue travel extensively across Wales when they steal — and go to war over — Pryderi's pigs, launching an onomastic series of journeys crisscrossing Wales to locations bearing the morpheme *moch* (pig) (for an account of the itinerary, see Appendix 5). This intricate passage not only recounts the travels of a highly mobile war-band, but also results in highly topographical prose, densely packed with the proper nouns of place names: in fact, most of the passage occurs across a single folio of the Red Book (186v). As with the earlier example from *Fouke*, Math's travels serve to embed the text in the very geography it describes, creating an almost palpable sense of localism. Admittedly, this passage represents an extreme case among the Four Branches, but its topographical and onomastic style can be located to varying extents throughout the *Mabinogi*.

Yet, as embedded in the geography and topography of Wales as these texts are, the world they depict is also an eminently well-connected one beyond Britain, particularly with regard to Ireland — a connection that emerges strongly in the Second Branch, *Branwen ferch Llŷr*.²⁴ *Branwen* begins with Matholwch, king of Ireland, travelling to Harlech to ask the giant King Bendigeidfran (Bran) of Britain the hand of his sister, Branwen. Branwen's half-brother Efnisien is angry that his consent to the marriage had not been sought and mutilates Matholwch's horses in Talebolion. Bran appeases Matholwch with the gift of a magic cauldron. The married couple leave for Ireland, where Branwen is abused; she sends a starling to Caer Saint to inform her brother, leading to an invasion of Ireland by the British. The Irish lay on a feast for the British, intending to ambush them; however, Efnisien anticipates the trick by killing the hidden men, and throws his half-nephew Gwern (son of Branwen and

²³ See, for example, Pwyll in the First Branch returning from a circuit of Dyfed (25); Manawydan in the Third also tours Dyfed (51); and in the Fourth Branch we are told that Gilfaethwy and Gwydion circuit the land in Math's stead (67). Similarly, in order to avoid Math's court, the outcast nephews also tour the land until a ban is issued against them receiving food and drink (74).

²⁴ For an excellent discussion of Irish influence on *Branwen*, see Sims-Williams (2011, 188–207). The literature on Welsh-Irish connections is vast, but good places to start are Davies (1990, esp. 48–55), Mac Cana (2007), Sims-Williams (2011), and Hogan (2013).

Matholwch) into a fire. Efnisien dies destroying Matholwch's cauldron, while, on returning, Branwen dies of a broken heart in Aber Alaw. Having laid waste to Ireland, the surviving British are ordered by the wounded King Bendigeidfran to cut off his head and bury it beneath the Gwynfryn (White Hill) in London; on the way, the company stay in Harlech, then Gwales (Grassholm Island, off the Pembrokeshire coast), before moving on to London where they bury the head.

It should already be visible from a brief synopsis that *Branwen* is marked by the same topographic, onomastic preoccupations indicated in the opening section of *Math*, as well as by a high level of interaction between the British and Irish realms. Other details in *Branwen* reveal an image of an interconnected North Atlantic archipelago. For example, Bendigeidfran tells his companions before severing his head that they will spend eighty years in Gwales, during which the head will not decay and time will not pass: 'Ac yny agoroch y drws parth ac Aber Henuelen, y tu ar Gernyw' (10, ll. 369–70; until you open the door towards Aber Henfelen, facing Cornwall).²⁵ As Sioned Davies (2007, 236, n. 32) notes, this island sojourn is an entry into a kind of otherworld. It is surely no coincidence, however, that *Aber Henfelen* likely also designates the Bristol Channel, one of the busiest waterways in all of Britain in terms of trade with the Irish Sea, North Sea, and Atlantic worlds. In other words, the timeless, static purgatory of Gwales is broken only when the company quite literally opens the door onto a world of trade, movement, and interaction.

Another such detail occurs when, on the declaration of war between Britain and Ireland, one of the first responses of the Irish is to establish a British embargo:

'Ie, Arglwyd,' heb y wyr wrth Uatholwch, 'par weithon wahard y llongeu, a'r yscraffeu, a'r corygeu, ual nat el neb y Gymry; ac a del yma o Gymry, carachara wynt ac na at trachefyn, rac gwybot hynn.' (6, ll. 205–208)

'Aye, Lord,' said his men to Matholwch, 'henceforth set a ban on the ships and the boats and the coracles, such that none may go to Wales; and whoever should come here from Wales, imprison them and do not allow them back, in case they discover this [i.e. the mistreatment of Branwen].'

Firstly, this embargo explains why Branwen resorts to sending her message by starling. Secondly, it reveals an otherwise vibrant world of British-Irish interaction, involving the free and frequent movement of people, goods, and information. These networks must be shut down in order to prevent Bendigeidfran from learning of his sister's mistreatment. Tellingly, the Irish resolve to imprison anyone who does cross the Irish Sea, emphatically preventing further mobility.

²⁵ Quotations for the *Mabinogi* are from Ifor Williams' 1951 edition (White Book), except for *Branwen*, for which quotations come from Ian Hughes' 2017 edition (*Bendigeidfran Uab Llyr*) (White Book). Any significant variance between the Red and White Book texts is noted.

Certain political centres (Math's Caer Dathyl; Pryderi's Arberth) thus emerge from the *Mabinogi* as particularly connected centres in a decidedly non-Anglocentric geopolitical map, centred as much on the axis of the Irish Sea as of the English Channel. However, although a pre-Saxon, pre-Norman geography is posited in these texts, that geography and its terminology are consistently underwritten by references to England and the Marches as lands that offer prosperity via networks of trade and travel. Take, for example, the Third Branch, when the magic mist has made the population of Dyfed disappear. Pryderi and Manawydan live for a year by hunting meat and fish, before Pryderi proclaims: “Kyrchwn Loygyr, a cheisswn greft y caffom yn ymborth” (52; Let us make for England, and seek a craft by which we can make our living).²⁶ Later too, when Pryderi and Rhiannon are stuck to the magic bowl, Manawydan declares to Cigfa: “Kyrchwn Loegyrr. Hawssaf yw in ymborth yno” (58; Let us make for England. It is easiest to make a living there).

Of course, the historiographical terminology of these passages, referring to *Lloygyr*, betrays the post-Galfridian world in which this text is being copied and consumed. What such references also betray, however, is that, although they posit a kind of retrospective Welsh utopia prior to the coming of the Saxons and Normans, the worlds of the *Mabinogi* are shaped and inflected by the political, cultural, and economic geographies of the contemporary world of their copying and consumption. Thus, settlements like Oxford and Hereford, although rebranded as constituents of a pan-Celtic Britain, emerge as prosperous territories to which the leaders of Wales remain closely connected. That said, the map of the *Mabinogi* remains a decidedly non-Anglocentric one that charts its protagonists' connections not only eastwards into the wider March and England, but also westwards into the vibrant Irish Sea zone. The continued investment in such a world on the part of a Marcher *uchelwr* and his late fourteenth-century court surely exceeds mere antiquarianism.

A similarly global perspective is visible in another of the Red Book's native tales, *Culhwch ac Olwen*, not least in a striking passage in which the gatekeeper Glewlwyd Gafaelfawr declares the arrival of Culhwch to Arthur's court.²⁷ The section is worth quoting at length:

‘Mi a uum gynt yGhaer Se ac Asse, yn Sach a Salach, yn Lotor a Fotor. Mi a uum gynt yn yr India Uawr a'r India Uechan. Mi a uum gynt yn ymlad deu Yynyr pan ducpwynt y deudec gwystyl o Lychlyn. A mi a uum gynt yn yr Egrop, a mi a uum yn yr Affric, ac yn

²⁶ Although Pryderi had recently been to Oxford to honour Caswallon, rather than simply return there, the first town he and Manwydan make for — and the only one to be named — is Hereford, in a neat illustration of the city's status as a go-to commercial centre from a Welsh perspective and of the border city's spatial, cultural, and economic connections to Wales and, indeed, to the Glamorgan March of the text's copying in the Red Book.

²⁷ *Culhwch*'s earliest manuscript witnesses are the White and Red Books. Bromwich and Evans (1988, lxxxviii) estimate that the extant redaction dates to around 1100 or slightly later, given evidence of Galfridian influence. Simon Rodway (2005, 43) has suggested a *terminus post quem* of the mid-twelfth century.

ynyssod Corsica, ac yGhaer Brythwch a Brythach a Nerthach. Mi a uum gynt pan ledeist ti teulu Gleis mab Merin, pan ledeist Mil Du mab Ducum. Mi a uum gynt pan wereskynneist Groec vrth parth y dwyrein. Mi a uum gynt yGaer Oeth ac Anoeth, ac yGhaer Neuenhyr Naw Nawt: teyrndynon tec a welsam ni yno (...)’ (5; ll. 116–27)

‘I was once in Caer Se and Asse, in Sach and Salach, in Lotor and Ffotor. I was once in India the Great and India the Lesser. I was once in the battle of the two Ynyrs when the twelve hostages were taken from Norway. And I was once in Europe, I was in Africa, and the islands of Corsica and in Caer Brythwch and Brythach and Nerthach. I was once there when you killed Gleis son of Merin, when you killed Mil Du son of Dugum. I was once there when you conquered Greece in the east. I was once in Caeroeth and Anoeth, and in Caer Nefenhyr Nawdant: fair kingly men we did see there (...)’

Andrew Breeze (2011) has identified several of the seemingly nonsensical names as real-world places filtered through Orosius’s *Historiae adversum paganos*: Caer Se and Asse supposedly designate Syracuse in Sicily; Sach and Salach are Arachosia in Afghanistan; Lotor and Fotor are the river Ottorogorra east of the Ganges.²⁸ In later work, Breeze (2014) also identifies Nerthach as Carthage, Brythach as Adrumetum (sixty miles south of Carthage in Orosius), and Ghaer Brythwch as Byzacium. In other words, *Culhwch* is marked by Welsh thinking about global geography, three iterations of which appear in the Red Book (i.e. *Culhwch* and the two versions of *Delw y Byd*), filtered through works like Orosius’s *Historiae* and Honorius’s *Imago mundi*.

Nevertheless, the text’s most recent editors also underline the exoticising function of this passage’s references to places like India, Greece, and Norway (Davies 2007, 261, n. 182; Bromwich and Evans 1988, 59–60). This is true to an extent; however, by the time of *Culhwch*’s copying into the Red Book, connections with increasingly far-flung locations were becoming increasingly frequent and substantial (due to networks of trade, crusade, clergy, etc.).²⁹ As such, the references in this passage deserve to be taken, as they may well have been by Hopcyn’s Glamorgan community, more seriously than simply as a fantastical list of magical places. Moreover, as Petrovskaia (2015) notes, this list is as much a political statement as it is a geography lesson, since ‘the instantly recognizable place-names anchor Arthur’s conquests onto a global geographical framework and establish him firmly as an

²⁸ There is evidence for the influence of Orosius elsewhere in medieval Welsh literature. Although no Orosius manuscripts of Welsh provenance survive, Marged Haycock has noted that the two surviving Welsh Alexander poems also derive from Book III of Orosius’s *Historiae*, possibly via a now lost manuscript, an intermediary text based on Orosius, or simply accreted knowledge of the text’s content. Orosius is not, however, the only intertext of this scene: E. Anwyl (1913, 413) and, more recently, Marged Haycock (1987, 19–20) note that the scene closely echoes a poem in the Book of Taliesin listing the lands conquered by Alexander the Great. Idris Foster (1959) points to another precedent in the Old Irish tale *Fled Bricrend* where Curoi mac Dairi lists his various travels. Finally, Petrovskaia (2015, 42) suggests that this section also echoes the *Prophetiae* section of Geoffrey’s *Historia*, and notes that several of the locations mentioned in the Alexander poems and *Culhwch* can be cross-referenced to locations mentioned in *Delw y Byd* (141, 149).

²⁹ On Welsh participation in these various networks, see a number of contributions to the recent volumes on *Monastic Wales* (2013) and *The Welsh and the Medieval World* (2018). In particular, see Bezant (2013), Nicholson (2013), Brough (2018), Chapman (2018), Emlyn (2018). On the medieval Welsh worldview generally, see Carr (2004) and Conley (2014). On Welsh participation in pilgrimage and crusading in particular, see Hurlock (2011; 2013; 2018). On Welsh travel and travel to Wales in later centuries, see Cramsie (2015) and the outputs of the research project *European Travellers to Wales, 1750–2010*: <http://etw.bangor.ac.uk>.

international power to rival and outshine the legendary continental rulers Alexander and Charlemagne' (167). What this 'anchoring' rests on, however, is a kind of networking: it situates Arthur's local court in relation to a network of other localities that stretch across the known world.

More than this, there is a literary, poetic quality to Glewlwyd's speech here that positivistic readings of this passage have neglected to take into account, or else have taken for granted: the passage's networking of Arthur's insular court is engrained not merely in its geographical referents, but in the very rhetoric of the text. The lands to which Glewlwyd refers most often appear as pairs or triads linked together phonologically by rhyme, alliteration, and/or consonance. The first sentence opens with three couplets of rhyming names: *Lotor/Fotor* form a strong disyllabic rhyming pair, while sibilance marks the rhyme of *Caer Se/Asse* and alliterative sibilance links the *Sach/Salach* rhyme. Later, there is only one vowel shift (between *w* and *a*) differentiating between the alliterative *Brythwch* and *Brythach*, with the new *-thach* ending picked up by the rhyme in *Nerthach*. At the end of the speech too, we move from rhyme through to consonance: *Caeroeth* is rhymed with *Anoeth*, with *Caer Nefenhyr* *Nawdant* picking up the initial morpheme of *Caeroeth* and the alveolar dental introduced by *Anoeth*. Finally, the formulaic *mi a uum* is repeated eight times over the course of the speech, further connecting each of these locations in the rhetoric of the oration.

Petrovskaia (2015, 147) notes that Glewlwyd's list has no obvious structure, and fails to corroborate T-O map geography. Instead, Glewlwyd's speech criss-crosses the globe, tracing — I would suggest — a decentralised network based less on pre-existing geographical models than on sound. What we have in this highly worked passage — perhaps best described as a kind of prose-poetry — is a soundscape that embeds these global locations into the very phonetics of Welsh (whose native poetry is, in any case, highly reliant on internal rhyme, alliteration, and consonance). Thus, this truly global network of locations finds itself connected to the local Welsh court not only by the intrepid travels of Arthur, Glewlwyd, and their companions, but also by the very linguistic acrobatics of the Welsh text itself.

Transposed into a mythical past, it may seem difficult to spot any contemporary political significance in *Culhwch*; yet, given the context of anti-English sentiment in which this text was being copied and consumed, it is, on the contrary, difficult to *miss* the political resonance of its imagining of such a global, non-Anglocentric geography — and of Wales's place within it.

The Glamorgan text with the most global perspective is without doubt *Ffordd y Brawd Odrig*. The text is a travel narrative recounting the *enryuedodeu* (marvels) that he encounters on his travels, often relating to death rituals, cannibalism, and local fauna. One point that repeatedly surfaces is the productive, technologically advanced nature of the world in which he is travelling. Many of the cities and lands visited are described as *frwythlawn* (fruitful) or as rich in *ymborth(eu)* (food/sustenance). Locations represented in such terms include: Tabris (Tabriz), Cassar (Kashan), Gest (Yezd), Comwn (Persepolis), Tir Job (the Land of Job), Ormes (Hormuz), Tana (Thane), Java, Saitan (T'swan-Chau-Fu), Kanasia (Hang-Chau), Chilempo (Nan-King), Sumacoce (Lin-t'sing), and Kosan Si-nganfu. Odrig also makes much of their material riches. Cathan and Machimoran (Nicobar Islands) are singled out as rich in *margaritis* (pearl stones). Sidan is described as having a stream full of leeches in which there are 'mein rubi, adamantes, a margarit, a gemmeu ereill gwerthuawr' (45; ruby stones, and diamonds, and pearls, and other valuable gems). Odrig's description of material riches reaches its apotheosis at the court of the Khan. Here, he describes the Khan's great feasts, where his nine thousand barons bring their 'koroneu ac eurdrych' (crowns and golden chains), 'a phob vn ohonunt a gwisic o vrethyn eur amdanaw, a mein margarit a dalo deng mil o floringot' (51–52; each of them [the barons] wearing golden cloth and pearl stones worth ten thousand florins). Similarly, he describes the chariot of the Khan as one made of noble aloe trees, with a roof of gold and pearls, drawn by ten elephants and ten of the largest and fairest horses (52).

These descriptions all play into Odrig's agenda of sensationalising eastern opulence; but they also mark his appreciation of technologically advanced societies and especially of their developed trade in luxury goods. Odrig's ascriptions of *ymborth* are often collocated with nouns like *marsiandaeth* (trade) and *maeleryaeth* (commerce): this is true of Tabriz, Soldonia (Soltanieh), Ormes (Hormuz), and the *marsiantwyr* of Kanasia (Hang-Chau) also feature (48). We even get a glimpse of the networks of the silk trade in Odrig's description of Sumacoce (possibly Lin-t'sing), where 'y mae mwy o amylder sidan noc y mywn dinas arall o'r holl vyt' (50; there is a greater amount of silk than in any other city in the whole world). The city's network links are clear: Odrig gets there by travelling 'gan ystlys yr auon uchot drwy lawer o dired a dinessyd' (50; along the aforementioned river [the Talai] through many lands and cities). Even at his most exoticising, when describing the cannibals of Lamwri (possibly Sumatra), Odrig cannot resist pointing out the organised and flourishing meat-trade organised around the practice: 'Marsiandwyr a delont y'r wlat honno (...) ac a'e gwerthant [y bobyl y wlat], megys

ninheu y moch; y rei a ladant wy ar vrys, ac a'e hyssant' (41; Merchants deal in that country [...] and they sell them [the people of the land], as we sell pigs; they hastily kill them and eat them).

Thus, even when documenting (or inventing) what he sees as its most barbaric of practices, Odrig continues to underline the eastern world's interconnectedness. Of course, this was a world to which Europe was connected via cross-continental trade routes, etc. Yet, as in Glewlwyd's speech, the networking of Europe to the extra-European world is as much a rhetorical, literary effect of the text as it is a real-world phenomenon. Odrig's point of view is a particularly pervasive one throughout his text: the narrative is essentially a series of first-person verbs describing his movements, and he often brings his ethnographic discussions back to his own perspective with the conjunctive first-person pronoun *minheu* (*GMW*, §54), which carries the added sense of *I meanwhile* or *I, for my part*. This emphasis is frequently extended by the addition of the personal complement *y Brawt Odrig* (31; 39; 52; 56; 57). Similarly, his frequent deployment of the first-person plural locution *yn brodyr ni* (39; 40; 47; 48; 49; our brothers), complete with the affixed pronoun (*GMW*, §62), not only refers to a Eurasian Franciscan network, but also embeds an implicitly European perspective from and to which Odrig speaks. In other words, Odrig's account is both descriptive *and* performative: it not only documents existing Eurasian networks, but draws attention to how it forms a connection between Odrig's European audiences and the distant lands to which *minheu y Brawt Odrig* gives them access. In short, Europe is networked with Asia not only by Odrig's travels but also by his *Travels*.

Ffordd Y Brawd Odrig is exoticising, sensationalising, fundamentally Eurocentric, and has a dimension that might easily be interpreted as colonial. It lends itself particularly well to how Mary Louise Pratt (2008) describes modern travel narratives as giving 'European reading publics a sense of ownership, entitlement, and familiarity with respect to the different parts of the world that were being explored, invaded, invested in, and colonized' (3). Yet, it remains significant that this supposedly provincial periphery should seek to participate in such a global worldview. And it is also significant that such a project was undertaken during a time of domestic political unrest, when Marcher claims to a place in global, non-Anglocentric geographies might take on heightened political significance. The rapid reception of the Italian monk's text in western Glamorgan does not merely indicate that region's highly up-to-date literary networks, as we saw in Chapter 1; it also reveals the global, interconnected

world in which Welsh-speakers in the March saw themselves as living.³⁰ Marcher participation in the supralocal networks described by Odrig is not limited to the act of commissioning of a translation; it is re-enacted in the language of the work itself, literally translating Odrig's cosmopolitan Latin *ego* into a Welsh *minheu*.

Conclusion

On reading the vast networks represented not only *by* this Marcher corpus (as in Chapter 1), but now also *in* it, can their 'peripheral' status be reasonably upheld? In a word: no. The texts encountered in this chapter all depict highly connected worlds populated by mobile protagonists, from the ancient Mediterranean to fourteenth-century Asia.

Yet, these texts all retain an almost palpable sense of localism, grounded in references to local people, places, and events. Indeed, so much of the interplay between the local and global in these texts is rooted in their *textuality*, whether in the topographical prose of texts like *Fouke* and the *Mabinogi*, the narratorial asides of *Ipomedon*, the narrative settings of *De nugis*, the poetics of the Harley Lyrics, or the rhetorically worked redactions of Odrig's Latin *ego* and *Culhwch*'s Orosian oration. It is in these ways that these supposedly 'peripheral' texts succeed not only in imagining and exploring global geographies, but also in asserting their own place within them, irrespective — and often in spite — of the reigning Anglocentric hegemony. Ultimately, the local in these texts is traversed by, connected to, and, in many ways, indistinguishable from the global: like the analytic moves of ANT, the texts do not so much zoom back and forth from local to global as if each were a discrete frame of reference; rather, they open up and flatten out the global into a transversal network of localities to which their own stand as eminently well connected.

Furthermore, the flattened-out territories of these networked worlds are politically resonant insofar as they decentre the Anglocentrism of the hegemonic medieval English. This can be most clearly seen in those texts that dramatise the counter-hegemonic potential of networking, namely in episodes where protagonists mobilise their networks in opposition to hegemonic power. More broadly, however, the texts do not position themselves in an asymmetric, peripheral relation to that power, nor do they simply assimilate themselves to it. Rather, they connect themselves to the wider world beyond

³⁰ For Carr (2004), *Ffordd y Brawd Odrig* stands alongside Welsh translations of *Imago Mundi* and Prester John as evidence that 'the leaders of native Welsh society (...) shared the general European view of, and curiosity about, the world' (15).

its bounds in a move that decentres it and, in a quietly radical way, contests its claim to hegemony in the first place. England, particularly London — that supposedly hegemonic ‘core’ of the medieval (and modern) British Isles — emerges from these texts as but one centre among the many to which their local worlds are connected.

It should be emphasised that the volume of that political resonance varies considerably, since each of my case study locales — and, indeed, each of the texts within them — represents a specific, even unique relationship with hegemonic power. I by no means wish to conflate associates of Roger Mortimer or Owain Glyndŵr with a figure like Walter Map, embedded in Henry II’s royal court as a self-styled Welsh expert, *romancier*, and satirist. Similarly, rebellion against the English monarch is seldom equatable to antimonarchism *tout court*: resistance is directed at the unjust policies of incumbent kings, not at the principle of monarchy itself. What this chapter has suggested, however, is that it makes a difference to read the networked worlds of these texts in light of the local political climates in which they were composed, circulated, and consumed, in which their composers lived or originated, and to which they all pay such close attention.

This kind of analysis has led to readings that often run against the grain of dominant scholarly opinion concerning a number of the texts. Yet, reading with networks has also allowed us to divorce those texts from nationalist and nationalising agendas. It has allowed us to acknowledge not their insularism, but their cosmopolitanism, and, indeed, their flattening out of local/global, core/peripheral binaries. And it has allowed us to restore to them the agency to contest hegemonic power that they describe, dramatise, and to which they demonstrably lay claim. The March, in short, has its networks and shows itself eminently able to contest.

3. Networks and the Nonhuman

The previous two chapters have argued that reading with networks provides a way of restoring political and cultural agency to peripheralised regions, communities, and texts. This chapter changes tack slightly and takes a thematic approach to reading texts from the Marches, focussing in particular on representations of the nonhuman. In this chapter, my argument, in essence, is that if thinking with networks restores agency to the nonhuman, then representations of nonhuman agency in peripheralised texts can be read as politically resonant. More specifically, when reading the various networks represented in my corpus (as we did in Chapter 2), paying attention to the representations of nonhuman agency in those networks offers another way to restore to them political agency.

Graham Harman (2016, 249) has suggested that ‘few contemporary thinkers have had more success than Latour at incorporating nonhuman entities into their writings’. So much was made clear in 1991’s *Nous n’avons jamais été modernes*, which sought to deconstruct what Latour terms ‘le Grand Partage’ between Nature and Culture that supports the fallacy of modernity. So often conflated with humanism, modernity is tied to the birth of man but asymmetrically forgets ‘la naissance (...) de la « nonhumanité », celle des choses, ou des objets, ou des bêtes’ (Latour 1991, 23; the birth of ‘nonhumanity’, that of things or of objects or of beasts). For Latour, the modern *Constitution* relies on ‘la séparation complète entre le monde naturel — pourtant construit par l’homme — et le monde social — pourtant tenu par les choses’ (49; the complete separation between the natural world — though it is constructed by man — and the social world — though it is upheld by things). What Latour advocates in response is an acknowledgement of the false binary of the social and natural worlds: only by studying the ways in which nature-culture hybrids are produced and eliminated (what Latour calls *purification*), only by showing how that ‘séparation complète’ has never been achieved, do we come to the realisation that ‘nous n’avons jamais été modernes au sens de le Constitution’ (68–69; we have never been modern in the sense of the Constitution). Already, then, in *Nous n’avons jamais été modernes*, the notion of nonhuman agency is central to Latour’s thinking.

Nonhuman agency is also a fundamental tenet of ANT: as we saw in the Introduction, the third of the five sources of uncertainty that ANT ‘feeds’ off is the restriction of agency to the human. Latour’s collective is composed of the ‘many entanglements of humans and non-humans’ (Latour

2005, 84), where agency is redistributed not only between humans, but also between human and nonhuman entities that exert their own agencies in actor-network formation and reformation. Latour explains: ‘In addition to “determining” and serving as a “backdrop for human action”, things might authorize, allow, afford, encourage, permit, suggest, influence, block, render possible, forbid, and so on’ (72).

In its redistribution of agency to the nonhuman, ANT resonates with recent thinking in posthumanism and object-oriented ontologies, and Latour’s work has been foundational for many posthumanist scholars. Several among them have sought, however, to broaden the scope of Latour’s nonhuman. Throughout *Reassembling the Social*, Latour’s nonhuman remains primarily tied to physical items, devices, or instruments: Latour’s examples for the ‘things’ of the above quotation are baskets, kettles, knives, hammers, and television remotes. He describes these objects as ‘participants’ that do not ‘determine’ action, but that reveal ‘many metaphysical shades between full causality and sheer inexistence’ (72).

A particularly suggestive appropriation of Latour can be found in Jane Bennett’s concept of vital materialism, which draws heavily on Latour’s work, but critically engages with his treatment of subjectivity and agency. Vital materialism considers the world in terms of ‘things’, through which runs a kind of agentic vitality: irreducible to any kind of soul, vitality is ‘the capacity of things — edibles, commodities, storms, metals — not only to impede or block the will and designs of humans but also to act as quasi agents or forces with trajectories, propensities, or tendencies of their own’ (Bennett 2010, viii). For Bennett, then, what qualifies as ‘nonhuman’ includes not only objects, but also animals, environmental conditions, comestibles, plants, etc. For both Latour and Bennett, however, the aim of terms such as *participant*, *actant*, or *thing* is, ultimately, to flatten out the subject/object hierarchy and its correlation to a human/nonhuman binary: *both* ‘humans’ *and* ‘nonhumans’ might more usefully be considered as variously agentic entities that, like Latour’s term ‘actant’, ‘can *do* things, ha[ve] sufficient coherence to make a difference, produce effects, alter the course of events’ (Bennett 2010, viii, original emphasis). What Bennett is calling for is a redistribution of agency that also acts as a redistribution of power, one that resembles the Latourian actor-network often in its vocabulary, but even more often in its denial of hegemonic status to any single agency, or *kind* of agency. Therefore, because the primary theoretical engagement of this work remains with ANT, I will retain Latour’s ‘nonhuman’ in place of Bennett’s ‘thing’, but I align my usage of it firstly with Bennett’s expansion of

the term to include agents like animals and environments alongside physical objects, and, secondly, with the posthumanist imperative to collapse the distinction between the human and the nonhuman in the first place.

That said, my aim in this chapter is not simply to *apply* the insights of ANT, vital materialism, and object-oriented ontologies to my medieval texts. Indeed, as Andrew Cole (2013) has pointed out, given that this field of theory has consistently neglected medieval material, medievalists should not ‘limit themselves to the “application” of its ideas and the mimicking of its lyricism in the reading of medieval texts’ and ‘instead show what it means for a new philosophy to be built almost entirely on the exclusion of the Middle Ages’ (115). This chapter suggests that one of the ways in which medieval literary texts might usefully speak back to this theory is in their *politicising* of nonhuman agency. In other words, the texts I analyse in this chapter not only represent nonhuman agency, but do so in ways that are politically resonant in their problematising and undermining of hegemonic power.

There are clear political dimensions to representations of nonhuman agency in Welsh and Marcher contexts. Take, for example, the texts — both medieval and modern — discussed in the Introduction as peripheralising Wales. Key to their peripheralising logic are representations of the Welsh landscape, by turns fantasised as ripe for the picking, by turns lamented as hostile and inhospitable. Recall, for example, Gaimar’s account of *Bretaigne* becoming *Engeland*. Not only is Wales configured as a periphery of England to which the Britons flee, but that Welsh periphery is also represented as necessarily inferior to the cultivated heartlands: ‘e les Bretons par la lur guere | estut guerpir la bone terre: | envers Wales en l’occident, | u erent lur alter parent, | s’en alouent e la fûaient’ (ll. 885–89; and the Britons, because of their war, were forced to abandon the good land; they made for Wales in the west, where their other kinsmen were, and to there they fled). Similarly, in the *Gesta Stephani*, we are told that, only thanks to the interventions of the Normans post-1066 were the Welsh subdued and civilised, and Wales made into a ‘*terram fertilem omnibusque copiis affluentem (...) ut fecundissimæ Britanniae nequaquam inferiorem æstimares*’ (§8, 14; a fertile, abundant land abounding in plenty [...] such that you did not consider it inferior to the most fecund part of Britain).

One of the main obstacles to the Norman invasion of Wales had always been its physical environment, negotiated much more skilfully by lightweight Welsh skirmishers than by heavily armoured Norman knights. As such, references to ‘Wild Wales’ as a hostile landscape are also plentiful. Take, for example, Henry of Huntingdon’s account of the events of 1095 or of 1097:

(...) postea cum magno exercitu pergens in Waliam, sepe multas Walensium turmas prostravit, sepe multos suorum angustiis locorum amisit. Videns igitur eos *plus inexpugnabiles situ terre quam uiribus et armis*, fecit parare castella iuxta fines Walie, et rediit in Angliam. (vii.19, 444; my emphasis)

(...) proceeding into Wales with a great army, he [William the Younger] overthrew many bands of Welshmen, but as often lost many of his own men in the narrow defiles of those regions. Seeing, therefore, that they were undefeatable, *more from the nature of the terrain than from their strength and arms*, he had castles built on the borders of Wales and returned to England.

Attributing Welsh victories to the landscape is intended here as a comfort for the English, minimising the agency of the Welsh themselves. That agency, however, is not evacuated, but redistributed, and the landscape itself emerges as resistant to the English invaders. This Wild Wales is also visible in the *Gesta Stephani*. When the king's courtiers advise against his travelling to the 'remotas Waloniae partes', they protest:

(...) nec tutum esse per abrupta montium, per condensa siluarum, in barbaræ gentis insidias circumquaque dispositas, exercitum ducere, ubi nec aquarum liquor ad sitim pro uoto releuandam se offerebat, nec escarum suffragia, quæ regio sufficerent apparatui, in promptu occurrebant (§101, 194)

(...) nor would it be safe to lead an army through the steep mountains and the thick forests, into the barbarous people's ambushes laid on every side, where neither water could be found to relieve their thirst, nor supplies of provisions available that might be sufficient for the king's army.

Again, it is the treacherous nature of the natural environment of Wales that causes the royal counsellors such distress. Our old friend Archbishop Peckham also couples Wales's peripherality with its wildness, when, in a letter from 5th July 1280, he thanks Edward I for sending him wine and meat 'en vostre terre sauvage de Gales' (i, 392g; in your savage land of Wales). This correlation also emerges in modern criticism. For example, Wales's peripheral status in Bartlett's 'heartland and border' schema is couched in terms of its wildness, of the unproductivity of its land: as cited in the Introduction, the peripheral peoples (the Welsh, Basques, and Bretons) are only ever 'absorbed by their powerful, agrarian neighbours' based in the 'arable heartlands' (2007, 28–29; my emphasis).

These are only a few examples but they are indicative of ways in which the Welsh environment has been framed by medieval and modern English perspectives writing from the 'core' of the British Isles. In all these texts, the peripheral is aligned with the uncultivated in all its senses — not only the provincial, the culturally derivative, but also the wild, the untameable, the *sauvage*.

What, then, this chapter asks, of the texts from 'Wild Wales' itself? How do *they* represent their *terre sauvage*, the nonhuman world, and its role in the networks their texts describe? What kind of agency do they attribute to it? And what, moreover, are the implications of their representations of nonhuman agency, given the political significance of the wild Welsh landscape?

3.1. *Un vent lor crest, qui mult les serre*: Hereford, c. 1180–c. 1210

If the worlds of *Ipomedon*, *Protheselaus*, and *De nugis* are, as we saw in Chapter 2, represented as networked, then the actors in those networks are by no means exclusively human. Rather, it is precisely as these kinds of agentic things that the texts of Hue and Walter imagine the environments, protagonists, and objects of their textual worlds. This perspective is bodied forth in the narratives of disinheritance that abound in these texts, and in the many episodes of land- and seascapes interfering in the narrative and disrupting human intentionality. These representations of nonhuman agency are consistently bound up with the texts' politics: they underline the contingency of human power — not least the ruling insular one — in its reliance on, and participation in, networks of nonhuman actors that do not acknowledge its claim to hegemony.

De Herla rege is an excellent example of such a politically probing representation of the nonhuman, since the radical transformation of the British king's life is precipitated by a series of encounters with nonhuman figures and environments. As discussed in Chapter 2, the pygmy is a magical creature, exoticised and othered, encoded — according to Patrick Schwieterman (2010) — as a fairy figure. Others critics, like Helaine Newstead, have drawn out the diabolic aspects of the figure. Jean-Claude Schmitt (1994, 135) reads the figure as king of the dead, characterising Herla's deal with him as a 'pacte diabolique'. Laurence Harf-Lancner and Elisabeth Pinto-Mathieu (2002, 201) also see the pygmy as reigning 'sur le monde des morts' with whom Herla signs a dangerous 'pacte'. As we also saw in Chapter 2, the magical figure is endowed with an inhuman omniscience, announcing to Herla the imminent arrival of the Frankish ambassadors and the British king's marriage to the Frankish princess.

It must also be underlined, however, that this supernatural figure is described in strikingly animal terms:

Institit homuncio capro maximo secundum fabulam insidens, uir qualis describi posset Pan, ardenti facie, capite maximo, barba rubente proluxa pectus contingente, nebride preclarum stellata, cui uenter hispidus et crura pedes in caprinos degenerabant. (i.11, 26)

According to the tale, this little man was mounted on a large goat, a man of nature to be described as one might describe Pan, with a fiery face, a huge head, and a long, red beard reaching down to his chest, beautiful with spotted fawn-skin. His belly was hairy and his shins degenerated into the hoofs of goats.

Elsewhere, too, the language used to refer to him evokes animal comparisons: his size 'non excedebat simiam' (i.11, 26; did not exceed that of a monkey), and he eventually vanishes 'tygride uelocius' (i.11, 26; faster than a tiger). Similarly, while, as we saw in the last chapter, the *nebris* (fawn-skin) aligns him

with Pagan otherness, it is not clear here, given his hybrid human-goat body, whether the skin is worn or whether it is his own skin. The ablative *nebride* conceals any attribution of possession: it might be translated as his chest being beautiful ‘with a spotted fawn-skin’, but equally as ‘with *its* spotted fawn-skin’. His animal associations continue as he sends Herla from his court laden with gifts ‘equorum, canum, accipitrum, et omnium que uenatui uel aucupio prestanciora uidentur’ (i.11, 28: of horses, dogs, hawks, and everything considered best for hunting and fowling). The pygmy’s final gift is the ‘canem modicum sanguinarium’ (i.11, 28), which James translates as a ‘small bloodhound’, but footnotes that this is the only known use of the phrase in the period. It could also be translated as a ‘bloody’ or ‘blood-covered’ hound, which puts a rather more grotesque spin on this exchange, and enhances the pygmy’s otherworldliness.

For our purposes in this chapter, the fairy represents a probing figure in relation to the question of the nonhuman: can he qualify as nonhuman at all, given his status as humanoid, sentient, speaking subject, gendered with male pronouns? Given his own marriage, he is also represented as engaged in patriarchal kinship structures. Clearly, he is not an ‘object’ in the way that a kettle or television remote is an object, but nor is he, for all that, represented in exclusively human terms. What the fairy might be seen to represent is, in other words, the posthuman collapse of difference between the human and the nonhuman. Like, for example, Donna Haraway’s cyborg (1985) or companion-dog (2003), this fairy body is neither that of an animalistic human, nor of a humanistic animal, but one that debunks that binary in the first place. In Bennett’s terms, we might say that he dramatises the very principle of vital materialism — that all things are precisely that: *things* that form variously agentic entities. In Latour’s terms, we might say that he represents one of those ‘many entanglements of humans and non-humans’, one of ‘those many metaphysical shades between full causality and sheer inexistence’.

Yet, if anyone in this narrative is a shade closer to sheer inexistence, then it is surely Herla himself, whose very narrative existence is dependent on this encounter: were it not for the arrival of the fairy, Herla would have no tale to tell, and neither would Walter. Herla’s inactivity is reinforced in the very syntax of the text’s opening sentence: ‘(...) Herlam (...) positum ad rationem ab altero rege’ (i.11, 26; Herla was put to account by another king). More than in the English translation, this division is anchored in the grammar of the Latin passive, where *Herlam* is the accusative patient, agreeing with *positum* the perfect passive participle, while *altero rege* designates the ablative agent. This emphasis on

the agency of the nonhuman actor might remind us of Derrida's work in *L'animal que donc je suis* (2006), where Derrida famously plays on the ambiguity of the first person *suis* as both *follow* (from *suivre*), where the human follows on from the animal chronologically in evolutionary terms, and as *am* (from *être*), where the human follows the animal logically, Derrida's point being that the animal lies at the heart of the human.¹ Similarly, Herla *does not exist* in *De Herla rege* until he is acted upon by the nonhuman, until he follows his instructions, and then literally *follows* him to his own cliff-side court. In other words, if the pygmy's body can be seen to collapse the human/nonhuman binary, then so too is that binary deconstructed by the interactions of the pygmy with Herla, whose human intentionality is utterly shorn of its primacy. Despite his socio-political status, Herla is unable to assert his power or intentionality at any point in *De Herla rege*: the supposedly 'human' 'agent' of *De Herla* is neither. Instead, he is fully dependent on his negotiations with other agencies that seem capable of both bringing him into and taking him back out of his own existence. We are returned once more to Huot's point: if the fairy's articulation of anxieties and fantasies over ethno-religious contact has contemporary political resonance, then so too does its articulation of anxieties and fantasies over the boundary between the human and nonhuman. In the context of the Angevin court, *De Herla*'s representation of a king helpless to the agencies of the nonhuman world cannot help taking on the trappings of a cautionary tale, warning any human power, not least the contemporary hegemony, that its claim to privileged agency in the world is fraught and unfounded.

The political resonance of this fraught human hegemony echoes most loudly in the conclusion to *De Herla rege*, which is marked by a final environmental encounter: the diving of Herla and his company into the River Wye: 'Tunc autem uisus fuit a multis Wallensibus immergi iuxta Waiam Herefordie flumen' (i.11, 30; At that time it [the Herlethingus] was seen by many Welsh people to plunge into the Wye, the river of Hereford).² Schwieterman (2010, 20–21) has underlined the ambiguity of *Herefordia* in this sentence, translatable as *Hereford* or *Herefordshire*, and suggests that either Herla disappears into the Wye in a district of the shire with a denser Welsh population (such as Archenfield), or that only Welsh people in the city could witness his disappearance. Yet, this is something of a false binary: Walter's reference to the people of Hereford as Welshmen is perfectly in

¹ For good commentaries on Derrida's text in relation to medieval material, see Crane (2013, 50–54), Griffin (2015, 104–7).

² As an extension of the previous paragraph's analysis, we might point out that even here at the text's climactic moment, Herla's final act is conveyed in the passive construction of present passive infinitive *immergi*, witnessed by the *Wallensibus* as ablative agents.

keeping with twelfth-century assignations of Hereford as *in Wallia*, with Walter's own description of Lydbury North (another 'English' settlement) as *in terra Wallie sita* (ii.12, 158), and with Hereford's location in the Welsh Marches conceived of as an Anglo-Welsh cultural space (Welsh borderlands, Welsh penumbra, etc.). As such, Michael Faletra (2014, 77) suggests that *De Herla rege* 'potentially unsettles the reader', because it evokes the Welsh gaze through which 'the great events of the kingdom are witnessed, are seen by Welsh eyes'.

But *De Herla* arguably pushes further, and one of the ways in which it does so is not only by — as Schwieterman (2010, 21) puts it — 'Briticising' the motif of the Herlethingus, but by Briticising nonhuman agency itself. By the end of *De Herla rege*, this spectre of British authority, the lost king of the Welsh, hangs in the air and runs in the water. In his encounters with the nonhuman, Herla is pushed to the borders of materiality, haunting the land like a ghost, before dissolving into the water of the Wye. Given the Wye's Latin designation as *Vaga* (< *vago*, *vagare*; to wander), the Wye itself comes to embody the British king's endless wandering, which becomes inscribed into the landscape itself. Indeed, we might read Herla's dissolution here as his becoming a kind of politicised vital materiality: if vitality is the agency that runs through all things, then Herla becomes the political agency that runs through all things British. This image has concrete political implications: if, as Laura Ashe (2007, 48) has argued, the Anglo-Normans turned to the *land* of Britain as an image on which to base their emergent English nationalism, then Walter's text reminds them of that land's pre-existing and ongoing link to a *British* past, with Herla roaming his twice-conquered land as both river and revenant.³ As such, Walter's text reminds hegemonic power not only of its unprivileged place in an agentic environment, but more pointedly of its place in an agentic *British* environment that rejects and resists it at every turn.

Hue de Rotelande's works depict the fraught nature of human claims to power in ways that are equally politically resonant. These depictions centre less on encounters with mystical figures than with the natural world itself. We move, therefore, from the river Wye to the Mediterranean Sea, whose agency is crucial in one of the very first crises of *Protheselaus*, the purloining of Medea's letter by the evil Pentalis:

³ Interestingly, Herla's link to the British past becomes, in the twentieth century, a useful peg on which to hang Welsh nationalism. Catherine Velay-Vallantin (2011) gives a fascinating account of Herla's twentieth-century uses. Once popularised by M. R. James's 1914 translation, and by the work of Herefordshire folklorist Ella Mary Leather, Herla functioned as the ideal pre-clerical, pre-Saxon figure on which to hang early twentieth-century Welsh revivalism and 'Celtomania'. As Velay-Vallantin puts it: 'Il fallait des revenants!' (283) and *De Herla rege* provided one.

E il sunt alkes loinz de terre,
 Un vent lor crest, qui mult les serre.
 Li venz cummence a traverser,
 A poi n'ad fait la nef verser;
 Muntent undes, crest lor peril,
 Tut unt desgardé lor atil;
 Rumpent lor cordes, cruist la nef,
 Cil dedenz abaissent le tref
 E vont waucrant par cele mer
 La u Deus les vodra mener.
 Li venz ça et la les debute,
 Jonas se crent, Gandés se dote;
 Les wages enflent durement,
 N'ad cil dedenz ne se espoënt;
 Li airs est tenebrus e neir,
 Nuls d'els ne pot altre veer;
 Gandés e li altre s'esmaient (ll. 377–93)

And now they are rather far from land, there comes upon them a wind that grips them tight. The wind begins to blow against them, almost tipping over the ship. The waves rise, their peril grows. All have abandoned their equipment. Their ropes break; the boat shatters. Those within lower the sail and go wandering where it pleases God to lead them. Here and there the wind buffets them: Jonas is fearful; Gandés is afraid. The waves swell greatly: there is not a man inside who is not terrified. The air is dark and black: none of them can see any of the others. Gandés and the others are dismayed.

This is a powerful dramatization of the disorienting Mediterranean storm. The dangerous movement of the sea is foregrounded by the adjunctive syntax of 'muntent undes, crest lor peril' and 'rumpent lor cordes, cruist la nef'. Similarly, the disorientation of the scene is expressed with dynamic verbs (*serre*, *creste*, *rumpent*, *cruist*, *debute*, *enflent*) in varying persons and tenses: the third person plural perfect *unt desgardé* is followed immediately by the present *rumpent*, which is followed by the third person singular present *cruist*, two lines before the third person present participle construction *vont waucrant*. Adverbs intensify the scene: the wind grips them *mult*; the waves swell *durement*; the wind buffets them *ça et la*. The use of synonyms and repetition gives the impression of a number of agencies besetting the sailors: we have both *undes* and *wages*, both *airs* and *venz*, which is repeated three times. The ship itself seems to come alive: its ropes snap (*rumpent*) and it shatters (*cruist*) as subjects in the active voice. Even the *venz* is not described as part of any impersonal construction (e.g. with the nonreferential *il* of, for example, *il y a du vent*); rather, the *venz* is the grammatical subject in the same way as the humans Jonas and Gandés. Indeed, a number of the verbs of which the *venz* is subject place the human sailors in the object position (direct and indirect): '*lor crest*', '*les serre*', '*les debute*'. Ultimately, the effect of the storm is to shut down all interaction, both between Medea and her letter's intended recipient, and between the very messengers on board the ship, who can no longer see each other in the utter darkness (l. 392). The agency of the natural world here has thoroughly thwarted human intentionality.

This disruptive agency of the sea re-erupts later when Protheselaus leaves Otranto in order for Dardanus to be pardoned and Anthony released:

Li venz de l'autre par lor salt
 En travers la nef, petit falt
 K'il ne l'ad tute reversee;
 Granz est li venz, la mer enflee,
 Li sigles est rompu parmi,
 Croist la nef, a poi ne fendi.
 Tost unt le sigle avalé,
 Tote nuit unt par mer wascré
 A grant mesaise e a dolor,
 Desqu'al matin qu'il fu grant jor (ll. 1447–56)

The wind from the other direction rushes upon them across the ship, almost overturning everything. Great is the wind, the sea swollen, the sail is torn in two, the ship rises, almost splitting open. They have soon lowered the sail, and wandered across the sea all night, with great hardship and sorrow, until the morning when it was full day.

A similar array of verbs is employed here (*salt*, *reversee*, *croist*). *Li venz* appears again as grammatical subject, here of the intransitive *salt*, with the humans appearing in the indirect object position ('*lor salt*'). *Li sigles* appears as a subject of the passive construction (*est rompu*), presumably with *li venz* as the unstated agent. *La nef* follows as subject of two intransitives (*croist*; *fendi*). The diminished agency of the human sailors is not only dramatised in this scene, but reflected in its very syntax: alongside the agencies of these nonhuman subjects, the third person plural subject pronoun of line 1553 — referring to the sailors — is omitted. Adjectives, foregrounded by the syntax of line 1450, emphasise the force of the wind and the swelling power of the sea. Meanwhile, just as before we saw how Gandés and the others *s'esmaient*, so too here does the *grant mesaise* and *dolor* caused by the storm underline the affective capacities of the seascape: this is a profoundly unsettling, painful experience for the sailors, whose mood is only lifted again by another change in the environment, when dawn breaks (*il fu grant jor*).

Moving from landscape to land, nonhuman environments can also be read as they function (or not) within human economies of property, ownership, and government. As characters constantly negotiate the acquisition, loss, and redistribution of land, the fraught project of material possession becomes an important plot driver in these texts. *De Herla rege* is the disinheritance narrative *par excellence*: Herla sees most of his former territory lost on re-emerging from the pygmy's cave. Similarly, *Ipomedon* revolves around the disinheritance of the eponymous hero by his brother, and evidences a clear anxiety over expansionist politics. This much is signalled from the beginning of *Ipomedon* in the description of King Meleager, against whom no *veisin* (l. 53; neighbour) dares wage war, since he has already conquered all the surrounding *terres* (ll. 64–65). Successful government, like

Meleager's, requires the submission of these neighbours and the conquering of their land. Unsuccessful government, like La Fièvre's, leaves one's lands open to attack from geopolitical entities contiguous to it:

Cil de Calabre unt souvent guerre,
 Suvent est trubleee la terre,
 Kar lur veisins tuz les plusurs
 Lur rendirent mult grans esturs (ll. 1809–12)

The people of Calabria often have war; often the land is troubled, for the majority of all their neighbours made very great battles against them.

In ways noticeably reminiscent of Anglo-Norman, Angevin, and Edwardian expansion into Wales as a contiguous territory, the text is primarily concerned by these lands' *neighbours*. In *Protheselaus* too, these powers' expansionism is a persistent source of anxiety for our heroes: Ismeine, for example, is plagued by a Danish rival to her dukedom (ll. 5075–82).

In both *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus*, territorially expansionist politics are consistently aligned with plot antagonists, who are represented as obsessed with the acquisition and domination of land. For example, within the first hundred lines of *Protheselaus*, we are given a description of Pentalis's control over the strategically useful coasts and ports of Calabria with castles 'sor la marine, bels e forz' (l. 87). Similarly, when arch-villain Daunus scorns Pentalis's surrender, the noun *terre* is repeated three times within seven lines in a speech, related in direct discourse, that enumerates verbs connoting ownership, possession, and exchange

'Avez vus ma *terre vendue*
 A celui qui me het de mort?
 Sor vus revendra vostre tort;
 Ja mais pur tant cum vus vivrez,
 Il ne vus la *terre n'avrez*;
 Mais la *terre* me *rendez* sus,
 Vus ne la *tendrez* neent plus.' (ll. 11476–82; my emphasis)

'Have you *sold* my *land* to him who hates me to death? Your wrong will come back on you; never, for as long as you live, will you *have land*; rather, you will *deliver up* the *land* to me, you will *hold* it no longer.'

The villainy of both Pentalis and Daunus is consistently accompanied by their greed for land; when they eventually abandon their evil ways, it is by giving up their lands; when they are defeated, order is restored by redistributing them.

Similarly, in an exchange between Protheselaus and the Pucele de l'Isle, Protheselaus explains that: 'Kar chascuns deit garder sa terre | Si l'em le volt a tort cunquerre' (ll. 6223–24; for each should defend his land, if another wishes to conquer it wrongly). Her tart reply is that he does not practice what he preaches, having given up his land to Pentalis:

‘Si parlez de terre defendre.
 E qui vus fist la vostre rendre
 E clamer quite a Pentalis
 E guerpir si vostre païs?’ (ll. 6233–36)

‘You speak of defending land, and who made you give up yours, and quitclaim it to Pentalis, and thus abandon your country?’

The Pucele deliberately misconstrues Protheselaus’s forced disinheritance as a willing abandonment of his lands, piling up verbs like *rendre* (to give back), *clamer quite* (to withdraw from, or renounce any claim to), and *guerpir* (to abandon, give up, renounce, forsake). Later, she goes on to offer him great geopolitical power in exchange for his love: she says that she will make him ‘sire de mei e del païs’ (l. 6602; my lord and lord of the country); that he will have many beautiful castles (ll. 6603–4); that there will no land so rich that he cannot conquer it (ll. 6607–8); that no land would risk waging war on his (ll. 6611–12). But the Pucele has misunderstood Protheselaus’s point, revealing herself to be just as obsessed with land as Daunus and Pentalis. Protheselaus had condemned the acquisition of land, land conquered *a tort*: his advice is that leaders should not only guard and keep their lands (*garder*), but also — crucially — keep *to* them. He declines her offer, preferring to return to his own lady and his own land.

Although not dramatised quite as vividly as in the Mediterranean storms, land in these texts also seems to have an agency of its own. It is never simply owned, governed, and stably transmitted. If the sea is a moving entity, then land is a *moveable* one that is continually lost, disinherited, confiscated, regained, and redistributed by networks of individuals. Crucially, however, it is one that outlasts the lifespans, reigns, and political machinations of any single owner, a point dramatised not only within each discrete narrative, but also by the sequel format of *Protheselaus*. The *terre* of Calabria over which Protheselaus reigns at the end of *Protheselaus* is the same *terre* that his mother inherited at the beginning of *Ipomedon*, though it has been disputed by and passed between any number of human agents. Mobile yet unmoving, *terre* in these texts acts not only as an index of morality, pitting, for instance, the geopolitical policy of Protheselaus against that of the Pucele or Pentalis. Rather, this *terre*, like the wild Mediterranean storms, throws into relief the contingency of human agency in the face of land and sea, neither of which answer to human hegemonies (whether Ipomedon’s, Protheselaus’s, or Pentalis’s) any more than the Marcher landscape of the author’s homeland answers to that of the insular power.

By way of a brief conclusion to this section, let us now turn to another Herefordian work that we encountered in Chapter 1: Simon de Freine’s *Roman de Fortune*, based on Boethius’s *Consolatione*.

Here, the allegorical figure of Fortune is an avatar of mutability, for whom possessions and powers are all fleeting: ‘Or s’en vient, ore s’en vet, | Cum flot ki munte e retret’ (ll. 37–38; Now it comes and now it goes like the tide and rises and falls). As an allegorical figure, Fortune represents a somewhat different category of nonhuman agency, one that is transcendental rather than physical. Yet, her articulation of mutability has recourse to the simile of the sea, which she positions as grammatical subject. Fortune reminds humans, more specifically, of the physical, geographic contingency of their existence:

Plus ne tient la terre espace
Vers le ciel ki tut embrace.
Tut seit ele si petite
Sur les treis parz hom n’habite (ll. 931–34)

The earth occupies no space compared with the sky that embraces everything; even though it is so small, man does not live on three quarters of it.

Already dwarfed by the size of the sky, the land is populated by humans only on a quarter (*quarte*) of its mass. Even within this quarter, fresh water, seas, and unfarmed land escape human control:

Nepurquant en cele quarte
Ewe duce e mer i parte,
E gastine ensement
De la quarte part purprent (ll. 937–40)

Nevertheless in this quarter, fresh water and seas separate it, and wasteland equally covers part of the quarter.

Again, we have an appeal to land and sea as images of nonhuman agency that escape human hegemony. To be sure, Fortune’s speech is intended as a reminder of the ‘weak ties’ of any and all human hegemony, the fraught and ephemeral nature of *any* human claim to land, sea, or sovereign agency. Yet, the political resonance of this kind of rhetoric can hardly be missed. The point that Fortune’s speech succinctly articulates is a point that underlies much of Hue’s and Walter’s works, and it is a point that, when deployed in the culturally composite, resistant regions of the Welsh Marches, may be honed into a probing political tool.

3.2. ‘Nou Ich am liche a tre that loren hath is ble’: Ludlow, c. 1310–c. 1350

The political modalities of representing nonhuman agency are equally prominent in the works of the Ludlow scribe. Let us begin with *Fouke le Fitz Waryn*. Like *Ipomedon*, *Protheselaus*, and *De nugis*, *Fouke* is, as several critics have noted, a narrative about (dis)inheritance and ownership of land, since Fouke’s outlawry stems directly from his wrongful disinheritance by King John (Meisl 1980, 133; Crane 1986, 57–58; Levy 1991, 257). Susan Harlan-Haughey (2016, 104) has pushed further, arguing

that land 'is actually the central concern of the tale'. In a reading informed by ecocriticism, Harlan-Haughey offers an extended account of the role of land and the natural world in *Fouke*: she sees in Fouke an animalistic, 'bestial' outlaw figure, and in *Fouke* a narrative that charts a move from wetland to greenwood, which, she suggests, marks an important innovation in outlaw literature. Harlan-Haughey's analysis is, however, marred by an insistence on assimilating Marcher politics to English nationalism. For example, she describes *Fouke* as participating in a moment of English history when 'the national myth (...) fixated upon the notion of drying up marshes, subduing forests, and building towers upon lofty crags' (118). And this despite the fact that Fouke openly rebels against the 'national' figurehead on the grounds of unjust royal intervention in local Marcher affairs. Although Harlan-Haughey's reading is admirable on several points, it does not account for the many ways and instances in which the natural world co-operates with Fouke in his rebellion, actively colluding in his antiroyalist insurrection, and the implications of this for any political reading of the text.

Throughout his outlawry, Fouke, his family, and his followers consistently find shelter, safety, and help in the natural world. Fouke's wife Maud, for example, travels into the mountains of Wales in order to give birth to their son when Shrewsbury is no longer safe for her. The child is baptised 'en une russele qe vyent de la Fontaigne dé Puceles' (39; In a stream that flowed from the Fountain of Maidens). Mother and child are then carried down to a grange whose own name embeds it not only in local topography (as we saw in Chapter 2), but also in the natural world: 'Carreganant' (Welsh *Carreg-Y-Nant*) means *stone of the stream*. Even by this early stage in the narrative, the Welsh landscape has already helped Fouke to strike a heavy blow against the king's forces. At the battle of the Gué Gymele, it is Fouke's relationship with the local landscape that gives him the strategic advantage:

[Fouke] conust bien tous les passages par ont le roy Johan covenist passer; e le passage fust mout escars, enclos de boys e marreis, issi qu'il ne poeit passer si noun le haut chemeyn, e le passage est apelé Gué Gymele. (35, ll. 6–9)

Fouke knew well all the passages by which King John needed to pass; and the passage was very narrow, enclosed with woods and marshes, such that he could only take the high path, and the passage is called Gué Gymele.

Such a passage vividly conjures up the narrow defiles and treacherous passages of the Welsh landscape that earlier chroniclers like Henry of Huntingdon so bitterly lamented. Fouke and Gwenwynwyn, prince of Powys, proceed to exploit the strategic benefits of this natural enclave to their maximum potential: they extend the marsh by digging a deep ditch and filling it with water, build a fortified palisade overlooking the ditch, and clear a secret pathway by which to surprise the king's men and then to retreat safely (ll. 10–15). In other words, after some slight modifications, the Gué Gymele

provides the Marcher outlaw and Welsh princes with a natural death trap in which to ensnare the king's forces. The co-operation of the natural environment in this Welsh/Marcher victory is remarkable. The defenders are even described as fighting 'com lyons' (l. 23), unseatable from their horses (l. 24): although a conventional way of describing righteous, valiant heroes, these animal analogies takes on renewed significance given the heightened agency and narrative presence of the natural world in this scene. The text imagines a thoroughly partisan landscape that itself repels the invading forces, its representations of the nonhuman, natural world thoroughly integrated into the political agendas of *Fouke*, *Fouke*, and the Ludlow Scribe.

When back in England and the March, the political territories to which *Fouke*'s outlawry pertains, it is again the natural world that provides him with safety and shelter. *Fouke* and his band navigate the land from forest to forest: from Babbins' Wood (near Whittington), to the Forest of Braydon (Wiltshire), to the Forest of Kent, to Windsor Forest, to the New Forest (for *Fouke*'s full itinerary, see Appendix 4). Like the Gué Gymele, these forests provide the outlaws with numerous strategic opportunities. In Babbins Wood, for example, *Fouke* is able to ambush Morys de Powys, the usurper of his Whittington holdings, and wound him in the shoulder (25–26). In Braydon Forest, the company's next destination, they come across a guarded band of merchants journeying to King John's court in order to deliver his pre-purchased goods of 'les plus riches draps, pelures, especes e guans pur le corps le roy e la reygne' (26, ll. 30–32; the richest cloths, furs, spices, and clothes for the body of the king and queen). After killing the guards, the company politely mug the merchants, feasting them generously while doing so, in order to deprive John of his purchases and to dress themselves in kingly grandeur (27, ll. 19–22). Not only do we have in this episode another example of the networked world of *Fouke* and of *Fouke*'s manipulation of networks in his opposition to the king, but we also see more clearly the natural world's co-operative agency in that project. The company then head to Kent Forest, which, once *Fouke* is betrayed by the flower-wreathed messenger, provides a strategic place of retreat from the hundred knights seeking to kill him (28, l. 36). Indeed, it is as if the forest itself conjures up the abbey where *Fouke*, disguised as an elderly monk, manages to trick the pursuing knights. Finally, later in the narrative, both the Forest of Windsor (48–50) and the New Forest (57) provide *Fouke* with opportunities to ambush the king on his hunts, the final encounter in the New Forest eventually precipitating *Fouke*'s pardon. Even in these territories where *Fouke*'s political exile is in effect, the natural world continues to work in his favour, the forests of England and the March consistently

providing him with safe spaces and strategic opportunities. Little wonder, then, that on his arrival at King Philip's court, Fouke adopts the pseudonym 'Amys del Boys' (41, l. 26).

The final nonhuman protagonist of Fouke is the sea, which, as in *Protheselaus*, frequently intervenes in the narrative, rerouting journeys or thwarting them, driving the narrative onwards and protagonists ever further afield. For example, it is the icy waters of the North Sea that force the travellers to turn about to make their way southwards towards England (45, ll. 34–36). On their journey southwards, the company is caught in 'une molt hydouse tempeste' (45, l. 37; a very terrible storm) that lasts for fifteen days and drives them as far south as the Iberian peninsula. The text foregrounds the travellers' fear in the face of such weather: 'trestous quidoient pur la tempeste moryr, e il crierent devoutement a Dieu e a Seint Clement qu'il lur delyvrast del torment' (45, ll. 37–39; all believed they would die in the storm, and they cried devoutly to God and Saint Clement to deliver them from the torment). Recalling the distressed sailors of *Protheselaus*, they do not even ask for their lives to be saved from the storm, merely for their torment to be ended.

Later too, as the ship lies anchored to a rock on the shores of Beteloye, the sea whips itself into a storm that carries a sleeping Fouke away from his companions to the city of Tunis: 'Ataunt survynt un hydous vent, e rompy lé cordes de la nef, e emporta la nef en haute mer' (53, ll. 13–14; With that, there blew an awful wind, and broke the ropes of the ship, and carried the ship off on the high sea). Again, *vent* appears as grammatical subject (of *survynt*, *rompy*, and *emporta*), and again, Fouke is left scared for his life, crying and lamenting the loss of his company: 'Donqe comence a plurer e maldire sa destiné, que ly fust si dure, e regreta ses freres' (53, ll. 17–18; Thus he begins to mourn and curse his destiny, which was so harsh to him, and was sorry for his brothers). These scenes are all the more affecting for that we rarely glimpse Fouke in such an anguished state: most of the text recounts his close scrapes and clever triumphs over his enemies. It is only here, when faced with a nonhuman agency whose power far exceeds his own, that he is reduced to tears.

Throughout *Fouke*, the sea — whether the North Sea, the Channel, the Atlantic, or the Mediterranean — is a productive force and active agent that separates protagonists and brings others into contact, driving them from Spain to Barbary, Scandinavia to Iberia, constantly reworking, reassembling, and expanding their various networks. More than this, it has the terrifying power to kill, to make even the most seemingly invincible protagonists fear for their lives and beg for death. In many ways Harlan-Haughey is right to describe Fouke as beastly; he is almost a part of the natural world that

so frequently works in his favour. But the text's representations both of the co-operative agency of the natural world (as represented in the forests and fords of Britain) and of that agency's equally destructive potential (as embodied by the sea) cannot help being politically resonant in the context of the scribe's 1320s Ludlow, or the 1280s Ludlow of the original poet. The first point aligns the very land itself with Fouke's cause, resonant with the antiroyalist campaigns of the Barons' War and Mortimer rebellion. The second point, meanwhile, reminds any human power, from the seemingly invincible Fouke to the power against which he rebels, of its fraught claim to hegemony.

These politically resonant representations of the natural world and its agency carry through into material included by the Ludlow scribe in Harley 2253. For example, the outlaw voice of *The Song of Trailbaston* (art. 80) makes its complaint from the natural setting of a forest: 'Cest rym fust fet al bois desouz un lorer | La chaunte merle, russinole, e eyre l'esperver' (ll. 97–98; This rhyme was composed in the forest beneath a laurel tree, where sing blackbird and nightingale, and the sparrowhawk flies). As in *Fouke's* forest episodes, the link between political complaint and the natural world is heavily reinforced here. The forest provides the poet with a *locus amoenus* for poetic composition, almost as if the environment were co-operating in the articulation of the outlaw's political tirade, the birds themselves singing his complaint.

Similarly, returning to the contents of booklet 4 discussed in Chapter 2, it is clear that nature imagery becomes a useful vehicle for the scribe's political agenda. In *A Song of Lewes* (art. 23), for example, the poet emphasises how the Earl of Warenne has stolen not just from the *people* of England, but from the English landscape itself: 'He hath robbed Engeland, the mores ant the fenne' (l. 35; He has robbed England, the moors and the fen). The *Lament for Simon de Montfort* (art. 24) makes extensive use of nature imagery, especially in its repeated refrain, where Simon de Montfort is described as *la flur de pris* (the flower of nobility) and where his loss is mourned not just by the people but by the metonymic land itself: 'Sa dure mort | Molt en plorra la terre' (His cruel death, the land will greatly mourn it). Of course, these phrases, in elegiac verse, are as much poetic conventions as anything else. Yet, given the political orientations of the poems themselves, this nature imagery takes on a political resonance, allying the very land of Britain to the baronial cause.

The trilingual trio of 'dust to dust' poems that follow *A Song of Lewes* and *The Lament* also marshal images of the natural world that adopt this political colouration. The first, *Charnel amour est folie* (art. 24a), is primarily a warning against lust; the second, a two-line Latin tag declares that

‘Momentaneum est quod delectat, | Set eternum quod cruciat’ (That which delights is momentary | but that which torments is eternal’ (art. 24a*); the third, *Erthe toc of erthe* (art. 24b), is a quatrain punning on the polysemy of *erthe*.⁴ As mentioned in Chapter 2, Fein (2015a, ii, 385) and Revard (2007, 109–10) consider these poems as meditations on mortality and warnings against earthly vanity. For example, drawing on the natural images of flowering and rotting, the *Charnel amour* poet writes: ‘Ja n’ert la char si florie | Que a purreture ne descent’ (ll. 5–6; Never was flesh in such full bloom that it did not descend into putrefaction). True, such a reminder of human mortality might well be read as an abstract musing on life, or even as a snide remark on Montfort’s fall from grace. But it is surely a lot less unsettling for followers of Montfort who is already dead than it is for those royalists celebrating their victory. Moreover, prefaced as they are by the virulently antiroyalist *Song of Lewes* and the *Lament*, both replete with their own politicised use of nature imagery, this poetic trio might also be viewed as a moralistic reminder of mortality not merely to *all* humans, but in particular to those in power, who, after all, have the most to lose in representations of human transience.

Moving beyond booklet 4, other poems in Harley 2253 corroborate this integration of a political agenda with representations of the natural world’s agency. *An Autumn Song* (art. 63), for instance, opens with the image of wilting flowers, before immediately turning to female figures of royalty and nobility to remind them of their mortality: ‘Ne is no quene so stark ne stour, | Ne so levedy so bryht in bour | that ded ne shal byglyde’ (ll. 4–6; There is no queen so strong or great, nor any lady so beautiful in bower, whom death will not take). Again, the aim of the poem is to remind people to live piously, but its use of natural imagery to target highborn women resonates — here in a misogynistic mode — with the works of booklet 4, reminding the most powerful that their social standing will fade like the roses and lilies.

Shortly after *An Autumn Song* is *An Old Man’s Prayer* (art. 68), a poem based on the first *Elegy* of Maximian. Here, the speaker, a clerk, draws extensively on nature imagery to articulate his fall from considerable wealth, power, beauty, and youth into poverty, powerlessness, ugliness, and death. He describes himself as restless as waves on the shore (l. 127), as mourning the sound of birdsong (ll. 136–38), as heavy as lead (l. 151; 250), as a faded star (ll. 226–28), as no longer admired by ladies who once were white as swans (l. 157), and as no longer gladdened by blossoms on briars (ll. 214–16) or by the songs of hawks and hounds (ll. 245–46). One of the most eloquent images of the

⁴ Russell A. Peck (1975) offers at least four different readings of the meaning of this enigmatic riddle.

piece compares the old man to a tree: ‘Nou Ich am liche a tre | That loren hath is ble; | Ne growth hit namo’ (ll. 190–92; Now I am like a tree that has lost its hue; it grows no more). Similarly, different variations of the verbal phrase *bring to grounde* (ll. 48; 117; 240) recur throughout the poem, whose internal repetitions and gradually deteriorating stanzaic structure recreate, as Fein (2015a, ii, 445) notes, ‘an old man’s rambling forgetfulness’. The phrase also serves to repeat the noun *grounde* as if the earth itself were calling to the old man — again recalling the booklet 4 trio. Of course, *An Old Man’s Prayer* draws on very standard tropes, and is itself a loose paraphrase of a classical work. But its deployment of nature imagery to depict a man stripped of his finery, youth, and power further contributes to the political resonance of nature imagery throughout Harley 2253 with its assemblage of poems that remind not merely humans in general of their own mortality, but remind in particular those — like the fine ladies and this once wealthy man — who have the most to lose.

My final example of politicised nonhuman agency in the Ludlow scribe’s works is *Kyng Horn* (art. 70). Like Fouke, Horn is a beastly exile, consistently linked to the natural and animal worlds. Horn’s very name associates him with the natural world, an association compounded on our first encounter with him as a child, for we are told that no rain could fall nor sun shine on a fairer child (ll. 11–13). He was ‘So whit so eny lyllye-flour, | So rose red wes his colour’ (ll. 15–16; as white as any lily-flower, his colour as red as the rose). Even the terms of his age, ‘fyftene wynter’ (l. 18), recall the passing seasons. Later, too, Aylmer declares that Horn should be instructed ‘Of wode ant of ryvere’ (l. 236; about wood and river). From the beginning of the narrative then, Horn is aligned with the natural world both by the narrative and by the figurative language of the text. The two seem to combine later when Horn appears in Rymenild’s dream as the fish she fears her net will not catch (ll. 655–66). This fish metaphor reappears later when the disguised Horn seeks to make his identity known to Rymenild alone: he passes to her the ring she gave him, mentions his own name, but also tells her that he is a fisherman, returned to a net he laid seven years ago (the length of time since their parting) to see if any fish remain caught in it (i.e. to see if she still loves him). Rymenild fails to catch on, but it is telling that it is through this extended metaphor that Horn seeks to communicate, as a kind of secret lovers’ language that is tied to figures of the natural world and unavailable to Fykenild.

The natural world seems consistently to co-operate, as it does for Fouke, with the desires and needs of the hero. When the pagans cannot kill the beautiful Horn-child with their bare hands, they

resolve to send the children of Suddene out to sea to drown (ll. 107–9). In this episode, the terrifying power of the sea is highly dramatised by the text:

The see bygone to flowen,
 Ant Horn faste te rowen,
 Ant that ship wel suythe drof,
 Ant Horn was adred therof!
 Hue wenden mid ywisse
 Of huere lyve to misse.
 Al the day ant al the nyht,
 O that sprong the daylyht,
 Flotterede Horn by the stronde
 Er he seye eny londe. (ll. 121–30)

The sea began to swell, and Horn hard to row, and the ship drove on fast, and Horn was afraid of that! They believed with certainty that they were going to lose their lives. All day and all night, until the daylight arose, Horn drifted on the sea, before he saw any land.

Like the sea-storms in *Fouke* and *Protheselaus*, the sea appears as a powerful, active agent — and grammatical subject — that swells and drives, overwhelming Horn's futile attempts to row the vessel. It is also a profoundly affective force that leaves the children afraid for their lives and Horn *adred*. Eventually, the children reach the shore, where Horn once again summons up the natural world to comfort his companions with the singing of the birds and growing of the grass (ll. 133–34).

Although a clearly powerful and terrifying force, the sea in *Kyng Horn*, unlike in *Fouke* and *Protheselaus*, seems consistently to respond to the needs of eponymous protagonist, transporting him wherever he wishes. For example, when Horn leaves Westnesse in exile, we are told that 'The wynd bigon to stonde | Ant drof hem upo londe' (ll. 761–62; The wind began to rise and drove him onto land), and when he returns to Westnesse, the text relates how 'The wynd bigon to blowe' (l. 1019; the wind began to blow) and 'The see bigan with ship to gon' (ll. 1021; the sea began to move the ship). Again, when as an adult he travels to Suddene, the text explains that 'The ship bygan to croude; | The wynd bleu wel loude' (ll. 1301–2; The ship began to move; the wind blew loudly). When he then returns to Westnesse to save Rymenild, we are told that 'The ship bigon to sture | With wynd god of cure' (ll. 1445–46; the ship began to stir with a good, strong wind). When at the end of the romance Horn briefly travels to King Mody's land, we are told that 'The see bigan to flowen' (l. 1523; the sea began to swell). And finally, on the journey to Ireland to marry Athulf to Ermenild: 'Horn eode to ryve; | The wynd him con wel dryve' (ll. 1533–34; Horn went to the sea, the wind driving him onwards).⁵ The only moment where the sea actively disrupts Horn's plans is in the drowning of the messenger he sends back to Rymenild to tell her of his coming (ll. 979–89), but even this has no significant narrative

⁵ Note again how natural forces (the *wynd*, the *see*) are cast as the grammatical subjects in these examples. Where the ship is the subject, it is as a result of the action or presence of the wind.

repercussions. If anything, the messenger's death serves only to install a level of dramatic irony, since the audience, unlike Rymenild and Athulf, knows Horn will return, thus heightening narrative tension. Moreover, if the text's representations of nonhuman agency work in tandem with its hero, then they also complement its wider critique of kingship: the wishes of *Horn's* failed royals are consistently thwarted not only by Horn himself, but by the natural world that unfailingly protects him. When the Saracen leader intends to drown Horn, he is instead transported to safety. When Aylmer casts him from his court, the sea is ready to take him safely not just *away* from Westnesse, but also *back* there, twice. When Fikenild goes to considerable lengths to build the castle on the tidal island that only a bird in flight might reach (ll. 1409–16), the sea still manages to transport Horn and his companions to the isle's shores.

Whether in the shape of King John hindered by the Gué Gymele or of rich Maximian stripped of his finery like a leafless tree, the works of the Ludlow Scribe describe a natural world that works against the rich, the powerful, and the royal. Whether by aiding and abetting anti-establishment heroes like Fouke, Horn, and the Trailbaston outlaw, or by reminding those in power of their small and fleeting lives, images of the natural world and its agency in the works of the Ludlow scribe pack a powerful political punch.

3.3. *Oed melynach y fenn no blodeu y banadyl*: Cwm Tawe, c. 1380–c. 1410

Medieval Welsh literature is, in many ways, a *tour de force* in the entanglements of human and nonhuman. In praise poetry, for example, Welsh leaders are frequently described as lions and ferocious beasts. Equally, in narrative texts, the human and nonhuman worlds are often inextricably interwoven, perhaps nowhere more so than in the mythical past imagined by texts like *Culhwch* and the *Mabinogi*. It would be an ambitious project that aimed fully to account for the enmeshments of human and nonhuman in these texts, since almost every character is in some way supernatural, often in ways that bind them to the natural world. Take, for example, the party in *Culhwch* that set out in search for Olwen. There are the seemingly human (if superhumanly knightly) Gwalchmai (Gawain) and Bedwyr (Bedivere). Yet there is also Gwrhŷr Gwalstawd Ieithoedd, who speaks all languages, including those of animals, and shapeshifts into animal forms.⁶ Also present is Cynddylig Gyfarwydd, who can guide

⁶ We discover this when Arthur sends him to deal with one of Twrch's boar children, Grugyn Gwrych Eraint, since Gwrhŷr goes 'yn rith ederyn' (38, ll. 1078–79; in the shape of a bird).

travellers through lands he has never seen, and Menw, who is able to cast invisibility and animal-soothing spells. Finally, Cai (Kay) can hold his breath or(/and?) go without sleep for up to nine nights and nine days, change his body size to that of the ‘*prenn uchaf yn y coet*’ (14, ll. 387–88; the tallest tree in the wood), light fires and stay dry from rain due to his high body temperature, and no doctor can cure a wound inflicted by his sword. Similarly, when we finally meet Olwen, she is described thus:

Oed melynach y fenn no *blodeu y banadyl*. Oed gwynnach y chnawd no *distrych y donn*. Oed gwynnach y faluau a’e byssed no *chanawon godrwyth o blith man grayan fynhawn fynhonus*. Na golwc *hebawc mut*, na golwc *gwalch trimut*, nyd oed olwg tegach no’r eidi. No bronn *alarch gwynn* oed gwynnach y dwy uron. Oed kochach y deu rud no’r *fion*. Y sawl a’e gwelei kyflawn uydei o’e serch. *Pedeir meillonon gwynnyon* a dyuei yn y hol myn yd elhei. Ac am hynny y gelwit Olwen. (18, ll. 490–98, my emphasis)

Yellower was her hair than *flowers of the broom*. Whiter was her flesh than *foam of the wave*. Whiter were her hands and her fingers than *marsh trefoil among the fine gravel of a bubbling spring*. Neither eye of *mewed hawk*, nor eye of *thrice-mewed falcon*; no eye was fairer than hers. Than the breast of the *white swan* were her two breasts fairer. Redder were her two cheeks than the *foxglove*. Whoever saw her would be filled with love for her. *Four white clovers* would blossom after her wherever she went. And for that reason she was called Olwen.

This is a rhetorically worked passage — visible in the parallelism of comparative adjectives that are foregrounded in the syntax of four sentences — and many of these colour-based comparisons are standard lyric topoi.⁷ However, there is a marked enumeration here of reference to the nonhuman world as points of comparison (marked out in italics): Olwen’s entanglements with the nonhuman world are both described by, and become an effect of, the figurative language of the text itself. The final onomastic explanation of her name (Olwen, meaning *white-track*, due to the flowers that spring up behind her) troubles her human status even further. In short, although the protagonists are nominally aligned with the human in terms of their corporeality (Olwen, for example, still has cheeks, breasts, hair, etc.), they are endowed with abilities and/or described in terms that mark them out as supernatural, mythological beings.

As such, a nominal distinction is maintained in these texts between this ‘human’ world and the nonhuman, animal world, though the agency of that world serves to blur even further the boundaries of the human and nonhuman. For example, in *Culhwch ac Olwen*, it is to a series of mystical *annieueileit* (31, l. 843; animals) that Arthur and Culhwch must turn in order to fulfil one of the tasks set by Olwen’s father, the evil giant Ysbaddaden Bencawr, and thereby to defeat him. In order to track down the imprisoned Mabon fab Modron, Arthur sends Cai, Bedwyr, Eidoel, and Gwrhyr Gwalstawd Ieithoedd to meet with the Blackbird of Cilgwri (probably the Wirral), who takes them to the Stag of

⁷ For a gloss on this passage, see Davies (2007, 267–68, n. 192).

Rhedynfre (possibly Farndon, Cheshire), who takes them to the Owl of Cwm Cawlwyd (possibly the area between Capel Curig and Llanrwst in Gwynedd), who takes them to the Eagle of Gwernabwy (perhaps Bodernabwy in the Llyn Peninsula), who takes them to the Salmon of Llyn Lliw (a tidal lake near the Severn Estuary). The Salmon swims with Cai and Gwrhŷr Gwalstawd Ieithoedd on his shoulders to Gloucester, where Mabon is being held prisoner.

In terms of Chapter 2, we might note here how this episode represents travels that trace networks of contacts between the animals across Wales and the March, and layer the text with topographical references. More significant for the purposes of this chapter, however, are the ways in which, like Walter's fairy, these figures trouble the binaries of mortal/immortal, human/deity, Christian/pagan, human/animal. Although the creatures assert that they are 'rithwys Duw' (31, ll. 857; 32, l. 870; shaped by God), they are consulted as seemingly immortal beings that inhabit Britain as avatars or mythical creatures. Indeed, their topographical names inscribe them into the very landscape of Britain, anchoring them (or their origin, at least) in a specific location. Similarly, it seems that they are all able to communicate, though not via human language: the purpose of Gwrhŷr Gwalstawd Ieithoedd's participation in the quest is to translate the animals' language since he is able to speak the tongues of the birds and beasts (31, l. 841–43). As noted above, this magical ability of Gwrhŷr's immediately throws into question his own human status (though in that he is hardly alone). More striking is the absence of any reference to the act of translation in any of these encounters: the text simply relays of the animals' speech in direct discourse. I will develop the implications of this point in Chapter 4; for now, suffice to say that this erasure of translation serves to minimise the agency of the 'human' translator, and gives the impression that the 'animals' are, in fact, simply speaking Welsh, thus further blurring the categories of human and nonhuman.

Furthermore, it is via the co-operation of these animal/human, Christian/pagan beings that Arthur's men succeed in their task — largely, it seems, thanks to Arthur's own prestige. The animals seem at pains to be of help to the messengers: the Blackbird, Stag, Owl, and Eagle all explicitly offer to act 'yn gyuarwyd' (31, l. 888; 32, l. 869, l. 880; 33, l. 899; as a guide) to the travellers, with variations on the theme of 'kanys kennadeu Arthur ywch' (32, l. 869 since you are messengers of Arthur). Indeed, the Salmon twice personally transports the heroes to Gloucester on his shoulders (33, l. 909; 924). The guidance of these animals is, moreover, oddly echoed in one of the tasks set by Ysbaddaden, namely, the procurement of two treasures (shears and a comb) from the head of Twrch Trwyth, a one-time king

transformed as a punishment by God into a boar, who leads Arthur and his men on a hunt across Ireland, Wales, and the March (for an itinerary of the hunt see Appendix 6). Interestingly, Armel Diverres (1992, 14–16) notes that Twrch's trajectory in the hunt passes almost exclusively through the territories of the Marcher lords, and reads the hunt as a political allegory imagining Welsh resistance to Henry I and his expansionist policies at the time of the text's composition in *c.* 1100. Such political resonance might also echo through the moment of the text's copying into the Red Book: if Twrch resembles Henry I *c.* 1100, then he may also resemble Richard II or Henry IV *c.* 1400. At the very least, it is clear that, like the casualties at La Fièvre's tourney, the hunting of Twrch radically recasts the geopolitical map of the British Isles, since huge numbers of Arthur's vassals are slain by Twrch and his piglets. In other words, the networks made, unmade, and remade by the travels of the protagonists and by the trail of bodies they leave behind emerge as a result of nonhuman agency, whether that of willing guides or of hunted quarry.

We might once more be reminded here of Derrida's *L'animal que donc je suis*. It is again by literally *following* each animal — whether being guided by the mythical animals or hunting Twrch across the March — that Arthur's men accomplish their task, a task that is, I would suggest, as much a political one as it is erotic. Ysbaddaden's rule is that of a hegemonic despot: he has stripped his brother Custennin of his lands and killed twenty-three of his children. His death signals not only the union of Culhwch and Olwen, but also the beginning of the reign of Custennin's twenty-fourth child, Goreu, who can be more safely integrated into the Arthurian political network. Like *Fouke* and *Kyng Horn*, *Culhwch* is, essentially, a political narrative about poor rulership. In fact, Culhwch only falls in love with Olwen as the result of a curse put upon him by his stepmother, who marries Culhwch's father (King Cilydd) after he invades her home and kills her husband (King Doged). The stepmother even describes him as 'y gwr a'm rydyallas yg gordwy' (2, l. 37; the man who violently abducted me).⁸ When she presents her daughter to Culhwch as a potential bride, the prince rejects her by claiming to be too young to marry, thus earning himself her curse. Similarly, the hunted Twrch was himself once a king, transformed into a beast 'am y bechawt' (38, l. 1075; for his sin).

As mentioned in the last chapter, it is tempting, given the highly fantastical world of *Culhwch*, to imagine it void of contemporary significance; yet, copied and consumed in the context of an anti-Ricardian/Henrician, anti-English climate, there is surely political significance to this text's

⁸ *RB* 'am llathrudawd'.

representations of poor and punished kingship. Moreover, without both the co-operation (and co-operativeness) of the animal guides, and without the slaughter of Twrch Trwyth and his children, the political and erotic objectives of the narrative would not be fulfilled: Ysbaddaden would not be overthrown and Culhwch would not win Olwen. Nonhuman agency in this text is, therefore, politicised insofar as it facilitates not only the hero's erotic fulfilment, but also his highly resonant overthrowing of a despotic, land-grabbing tyrant.

The political enmeshments of human and nonhuman also feature widely in the four branches of the *Mabinogi*, where 'human' characters are frequently transformed into 'nonhuman' animals and back again by an array of magical figures. We have already seen, for example, how in the Third Branch the enchantments of Llwyd Cil Coed emptied the seven *cantrefi* of Dyfed of all human and animal life, and transformed his company into mice to devastate Manawydan's cornfields. Other interesting examples of nonhuman agency might be found in the Second Branch, *Branwen ferch Llŷr*, not least in the starling that Branwen raises and teaches to speak in order to inform Bendigeidfran of her suffering in Ireland (6, ll. 210–17). Similarly, the decapitated head of Bendigeidfran, which he instructs his company to bury under London's White Hill, also retains a kind of agency: 'Nit oed anesmwythach ganthunt wynte gyduot y penn yna, no phan uuassei Uendigeiduran yn uyw gyd ac wynt' (11, ll. 414–16; They were no uneasier with the head there than when Bendigeidfran had been alive with them). As Davies (2007, 237) notes, there is a suggestion here that Bendigeidfran's head might still be alive, in a motif that has parallels in Irish culture regarding the heads of great warriors. In *Branwen* even a severed head acts as a mobile and agential entity, blurring the boundaries of human and nonhuman: possibly still animate, and carried for eighty years from Ireland to Aber Alaw, Harlech, Gwales, and London. Even once buried there the head is, according to Triad 37, later removed by Arthur in the belief that nothing should defend the British Isles but him.⁹

A wealth of examples is also offered by the Fourth Branch. In this text, Pryderi goes to war with Math after the latter allows his nephew, Gwydion, to trick Pryderi into trading his pigs, a new animal sent to Pryderi from Annwfn (the Otherworld). Math has, however, been tricked by Gwydion, who desires war so that his brother, Gilfaethwy, might gain access to Math's footholder, Goewin, whom he desires. While Math is away at war, Gilfaethwy rapes Goewin; the rape is discovered on

⁹ 'Ac Arthur a datkudya6d Penn Bendigeituran o'r G6ynnrvynn. Kan nyt oed dec ganta6 kad6 yr Ynys honn o gedernit neb, namyn o'r eidaw ehun' (*TYP*, 94; And Arthur disclosed the Head of Bendigeidfran from the White Hill, for it did not seem fair to him that this Island should be defended by anyone's power but by his own).

Math's return when he finds he can no longer rest his feet in Goewin's lap, because she is no longer a virgin. Gilfaethwy and Gwydion are punished by Math, who transforms them into pairs of breeding animals (first, a stag and hind, then a boar and sow, then a wolf and she-wolf), and forces them to mate incestuously with each other. When their punishment is ended, Gwydion suggests his sister Arianrhod as Goewin's replacement as Gwydion's footholder. Arianrhod, however, fails her virginity test: when she steps over Math's rod, she immediately gives birth to a son. As soon as the boy is baptised, he makes for the sea, whose nature he adopts (*annyan y mor a gauas*; 77) and swims like the best fish, earning himself the name Dylan Eil Ton (Dylan Second Wave). The nonhuman connections of Arianrhod's children continue: later in the text, when she places a curse upon her second son, Llew Llaw Gyffes, preventing him from ever having a human wife, Gwydion conjures up Blodeuwedd, a maiden made of flowers. When Blodeuwedd cheats on Llew with Gronw Pebr, and Gronw throws the spear that will kill Llew, he transforms into an eagle, and is only transformed back by Gwydion when his uncle is led to him by a pig. In revenge, Gwydion transforms Blodeuwedd into an owl.

As in *Culhwch*, the implications of these nonhuman protagonists and transformations are evidently erotic ones: Gilfaethwy and Gwydion are transformed into incestuous beasts as punishment for their raping of Goewin; Blodeuwedd is transformed into an owl for her adultery with Gronw; Branwen sends the starling to escape her abusive husband. But they are also political, and their actions and interventions have concrete consequences for the geopolitical maps of their diegetic worlds. In the Third Branch, for instance, we learn that Llwyd curses Dyfed, imprisons Pryderi, and destroys Manwydan's crops because Llwyd is a friend of Gwawl ap Clud, with whom Pryderi's father, Pwyll, had played 'badger in the bag' in the First Branch. Similarly, in the Second Branch, the arrival of Branwen's starling sparks war between Ireland and Britain, resulting in the deaths of large numbers of protagonists, including Bendigeidfran, Matholwch, Branwen's son Gwern, and Branwen herself. The British-Irish war also results in the remarkable scene in which the on-looking Irish mistake the gigantic Bendigeidfran for a *mynydd* (mountain) as he wades across the Irish Sea, and the British ships for a *coet* (forest) (7, ll. 243–49). This scene aptly dramatises this nexus of ideas connecting the political, the erotic, and the human: Bendigeidfran and his army seemingly embody the natural world itself come to punish Matholwch for his poor behaviour both as a husband (mistreating Branwen) and a leader

(declaring war on Britain).¹⁰ Even Bendigeiffran's strangely agential severed head continues to serve a political function after its interment, acting as one of the Three Fortunate Concealments of the British Isles: 'cany doey ormes byth drwy uor y'r ynys honn tra uei y penn yn y cud hwnnw' (12, ll. 430–31; for no oppression would ever come over the sea to this island while the head was in that hiding place). The Fourth Branch is no exception to the political consequences of nonhuman transformations: Pryderi, king of Dyfed, is killed by Math in the battle over the pigs; Lleu's transforming into an eagle, and his being transformed back by Gwydion, saves his life and allows him to end the Branch as successor to Math as lord of Gwynedd; the infidelity of the flower woman Blodeuwedd leads to Gronw's death and to Lleu's taking over of his land of Ardudwy.

In other words, the nonhuman world emerges in the *Mabinogi*, as it does in *Culhwch*, as one endowed with a radically transformative power. Sometimes, those agencies co-operate with the heroes' designs to overthrow the tyrants by which they are wronged (as in *Culhwch*'s animal guides, Branwen's starling, Lleu's eagle transformation). At others, those agencies assert their capacity to thwart human intentionality altogether (as in the transformations inflicted on Gilfaethwy and Gwydion, the depopulating of Dyfed, Blodeuwedd's adultery). As a pre-history of the Welsh landscape, the very mythological mode of these texts has synchronic political resonance: if writers like Henry of Huntingdon and the *Gesta Stephani* author betray anxieties over the Welsh landscape, then these texts provide a history of that landscape as a deeply unstable, mobile environment, where even its own rulers and peoples were subject to the agencies of the nonhuman world, their own bodies subject to animal transformations, and even, on occasion, to disappearing entirely. In fact, the pervasive onomastic preoccupations of these Welsh tales not only texture the prose with localism, but seem to inscribe the Welsh landscape itself as the driving force of the narratives, its very topography retroactively setting in motion the complex narratives elucidated to explain it.

Conclusion

In all of the texts analysed in this chapter, the nonhuman world is no 'inert backdrop' against which these narratives unfold; rather, it intervenes, disrupts, and co-operates; it assembles, disassembles, and

¹⁰ It may also be recalled from Chapter 2 that Branwen is only mistreated in the first place because her half-brother, Efnysien, mutilates Matholwch's horses after not being consulted about his sister's marriage, thus providing another example of the entanglements of the erotic, the political, and the nonhuman.

reassembles the protagonists' networks; and its agency has very real consequences for their erotic and political lives.

In this chapter, I have been describing two key ways in which the texts' representations of nonhuman agency are politically resonant in the local contexts of their copying, circulation, and consumption, whether that be a late twelfth-century marked by Welsh insurrection, the fourteenth-century Mortimer rebellion and its fall-out, or the late fourteenth-century political unrest of the conquest Marches, culminating in the Glyndŵr uprisings. The first is the way in which many of these texts describe the nonhuman world — in particular the landscapes and animals of the Welsh and Marcher landscape — as aligned with the interests of the narratives' heroes. Take, for example, *De Herla rege*'s embedding of British political sovereignty in the landscape of the island, or the co-operation of the natural world in the counter-hegemonic trajectories of Fouke, Horn, Culhwch, Branwen, and even Bendigeidfran. The second is the way in which these texts also draw attention to how hegemonic power is negotiated, if not frustrated, by the networks of actants with which it must necessarily interact, and over which its control is necessarily limited. Take, for instance, the disruptive seas and moveable lands of *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus*, the transience of the natural world that marks several of the Harley Lyrics, or the transformations inflicted on numerous protagonists in the *Mabinogi*.

We might conclude that, in many ways, the nightmare of Wild Wales that kept Englishmen like Henry of Huntingdon, the *Gesta Stephani* author, Archbishop Peckham, and many an English military leader awake at night is brought to life by the texts of this Marcher corpus, this 'Matter of the March'. How, these texts seems to ask, can the contemporary insular hegemony possibly hope to tame this Wild Wales, which, when it does not support local interests, recognises no human power at all?

4. Networks and Language

In Chapter 1, I argued that poets, patrons, and literary communities in the Welsh Marches engaged with French-language literature as a way of connecting with a supralocal culture through which they could participate in pan-European developments in literature, philosophy, and ideology. Chapter 2 then argued that a key way in which Marcher texts lay claim to political and cultural agency is by *representing* this kind of connectivity, depicting their localities as linked in wide-ranging, far-reaching networks. Taking a thematic approach, Chapter 3 analysed the political dimensions of the texts' representations of nonhuman agency in those networks. Following on from this, the present chapter seeks to scrutinise more closely the role of language — or, indeed, languages — in these network formations. More specifically, I seek to analyse the ways in which languages — and the act of translating between them — are discussed, thematised, and dramatised in the texts themselves, and I ask what the political dimensions and implications of this might be.

As we saw in the Introduction (§3b), the Marches were one of the most multilingual regions in all of medieval Europe, aptly described by Julia Crick (2011, 233) as 'a linguistic clearing-house with French-, Norse-, and Irish-speakers present alongside Welsh and English'. To this list we might also add certain Flemish-, Breton-, and Latin-speaking communities or individuals. Several scholars have noted the testimony, for example, of royal charters addressing 'francis et anglis et walensibus'. For example, one act of Henry I from (1129×1133) confirms a gift to the canons of Carmarthen using the formula 'francis et anglicis, flamingis et walensibus de Walis', a formulation acknowledging at least four ethnic communities and, by extension, four languages in southwest Wales at this time.¹

In this multilingual world, the stakes of language proficiency were high. As Helen Fulton (2011a) notes, after the emergence of French as the new prestige discourse in England post-1066, native English and Welsh speakers 'who wished to participate in more than one discourse of power had to become bilingual, if not multilingual' (146). And large numbers of them did: Fulton remarks upon the particularly high levels of integration of Welsh *uchelwyr* in francophone courts (195–97), an integration that, as Huw Pryce (2007, 50) underlines, 'formed part of a broader strategy to increase their power and status'. Proficiency in more than one language also offered opportunities for non-noble

¹ See, among others, Sharpe (2011, 29–30), Busby (2017, 31–32).

families and individuals: a number of professional translators were active in eleventh- and twelfth-century Wales and the Marches following the 1066 conquest, such as Bleddri ap Cadifor ap Collwyn (1070s–e. 1130s), Rhys Sais of Powys and his descendants (late 11th century to e. 1300s), and Iorwerth Goch ap Maredudd (c. 1110–c. 1177) and his descendants.² Several such translators became feudal landowners as remuneration for their services.³ In other words, multilingual proficiency in English or, post-1066, in French provided Welsh-speakers with a means to network with the reigning hegemony, and to garner access to certain social, professional, and financial opportunities.

Theoretical tools like Mary Louise Pratt's 'contact zone' have proven useful to medievalists for conceptualising spaces of linguistic and cultural intermixture.⁴ One risk of the contact zone, in the context of the Marches at least, is that it presupposes and reifies categories — in our case 'English', 'Welsh', 'French', and 'Latin' — as pre-existing, clearly delineated entities prior or external to their hybridisation. Another risk is homogenisation: it is, for example, not true that *all* the inhabitants of the March were always negotiating between *all* language options. Rather, it is truer to say that there existed specific networks of linguistic communities, interconnected by the activities of bi- and multilingual individuals, and that a person's linguistic horizons depended on the networks to which s/he was connected (connections which themselves depend on a host of factors such as gender, social class, etc.). For example, it is only in communities in specific coastal towns like Daugleddau and Rhos that Flemish can be included as a language option. Only for noble Welsh *uchelwyr* are French and Latin likely to be included alongside native Welsh. Multilingualism might, in other words, be thought of as organised into particular networks in which particular languages broker currency.

More broadly, network theory offers useful ways for thinking about language, multilingualism, and translation.⁵ Indeed, Actor-Network Theory is often known as the 'sociology of

² On Welsh translators, see Bullock-Davies (1966), Suppe (2008), Busby (2017, 47–50). Rhys may have been an interpreter between Gruffydd ap Llywelyn (d. 1063) and Earl Ælfgar of Mercia (d. c. 1060), though his descendants were still interpreting in the thirteenth century between the English and Welsh, by which time French would also have been necessary.

³ For example, one Richard *latemerus* is mentioned as a witness in a charter of William de Londres, lord of Ogmere (south Glamorgan) dated to 19 July 1114. The charter confirms the grant to Ewenny Priory of land formerly held of William by Richard and his son (see Bullock-Davies 1966, 13). Similarly, Wrenoc ap Meurig ap Roger (the fifth-generation descendant of Rhys Sais) and Gruffydd (d. 1221), son of Iorwerth Goch, are also recorded as holding land for their interpreting services (see *Liber Feodorum*, i, 147, cited in Busby 2017, 49, n. 108; 50, n. 110.) Finally, the gift to the canons of Carmarthen recorded in the charter of Henry I mentioned above was made by Bleddri *latimer* (i.e. the interpreter Bleddri ap Cadifor), who donated a sizeable four carucates of land in Eglwysnewydd.

⁴ On Pratt's contact zone, see Pratt (2008, 8). For an interesting use of this in a Welsh context, see Kinoshita (2006, 105–6).

⁵ For an interesting use of social network theory to explain the early shift from Old to Middle English in north and northeastern England, see Conde-Silvestre and Pérez-Raja (2011).

translation’, because the tracing of networks that is ANT’s very imperative rests on a particular model of translation. For Latour, translation signifies ‘a relation that does not transport causality but induces two mediators into coexisting’ (2005, 108). In this schema, ‘mediator’ is a term designating the ‘means to produce the social’ (38) that ‘transform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning or the elements they are supposed to carry’ (39). In other words, translation in ANT has a networking function that is both connective and transformative; as Latour puts it, a ‘connection that transports, so to speak, transformations’ (108). These translations are what produce the actor-network traceable by the ANT theorist: ‘there is no society, no social realm, and no social ties, *but there exist translations between mediators that may generate traceable associations*’ (108; original emphasis).

This is, of course, a specialised conceptualisation of translation specific to the theoretical apparatus of ANT: it does not refer directly to the linguistic act of translation; rather, it deploys it as a figure for thinking about how agency is actioned. It might, however, be usefully *re*-applied to the linguistic act in order to ask important questions about medieval textuality, multilingualism, and the values of particular medieval languages. Therefore, by deploying a notion of translation inflected by ANT, this chapter asks: what is the role of the language, multilingualism, and translation in the various networks described, for example, in Chapters 1 and 2? What is at stake for these multilingual inhabitants of the March in composing in a particular language, or in translating — or claiming to translate — from one to another? What kinds of connections and transformations are instantiated by such translations? What, finally, might be the implications for how we think about particular medieval languages and the political ideologies with which they are associated?

4.1. *Ky de latin velt romanz fere*: Hereford, c. 1180–c. 1210

It is not controversial to say that Latin in the Middle Ages has long been recognised for its supralocal nature: texts composed in Latin found audiences in ecclesiastic, monastic, and aristocratic communities. With his famous formulation of the *Lateinisches Mittelalter* (Latin Middle Ages), Ernst Robert Curtius ([1953] 2013, esp. 23) argued that Latin, the culture of Rome, and the topoi of its literature permeate, and provide a common basis for, virtually all genres of European vernacular literature. The traditional association of Latin with textual authority was, as Ryan Szpiech (2012, 64) explains, threefold: as the language of Rome; as a language of learning, culture, and philosophy, of the *auctores* (in contradistinction to Greek and Arabic); and as a holy language, alongside Hebrew and

Greek. Latin is, in other words, superior to the vernacular in its imperial, cultural, and religious history. In theory at least, Latin represents the authoritative, supralocal language *par excellence*, the *lingua franca* of the Middle Ages that, in the words of Jan Zielkowski (1996, 506), ‘enabled the Christianized peoples of Western Europe to transcend the localism of many different languages and dialects, and to form a true “European Community” *avant la lettre*’.

Enter Walter Map’s *De nugis Curialium*. Although written in Latin, the *De nugis* is everywhere permeated by its author’s multilingual culture. So much is evident in the variety of contexts from which Walter draws his material, which — as we saw in Chapter 2 — ranges from the British Isles to France and Italy, with other narratives betraying Greek, Slavic, and Levantine influence. As several scholars have noted, the influence of vernacular French culture is particularly marked.⁶ Smith (2017, 28–35) has studied in depth Walter’s associations with vernacular romance: he argues that *distinctio* 3 of *De nugis* coheres around ‘four polished romances’ that show Walter to have ‘read widely in this popular genre’ (29).⁷ Similarly, Walter’s supposed authorship of the *Queste* and *Mort* is, for Smith (35–36), explained by his status as a courtier who was simultaneously invested in Welsh culture and in vernacular French romance. Indeed, it is possible that Walter was known for further vernacular compositions that have not survived (Webster 1940, 277; Cartlidge 2011, 3). As such, *De nugis Curialium* attests less to the superiority of Latin over vernacular culture, than to a two-way leakage between the two, to a kind of reciprocal cross-contamination whereby aristocratic writers and audiences were composing and consuming material in both Latin and the vernacular.⁸

The supposed barrier between Latin and the vernacular is further broken down by Walter’s representation of his own writing process, which he describes thus:

Siluat uobis et materiam, non dico fabularum sed faminum appono; cultui etenim sermonum non intendo, nec si studeam consequar. Singuli lectores appositam ruditatem exculcant, ut eorum industria bona facie prodeat in publicum. Venator uester sum: feras uobis affero, fercula faciatis. (ii.32, 208)

I set before you a forest and timber yard I do not say of stories but of *famina*; for I do not focus on the cultivation of style, nor, if I did strive for it, would I achieve it. May each reader carve up the proffered raw material, so that thanks to their diligence it may appear in the world in good condition. I am your huntsman: I bring you the beasts that you might make dishes of them.

⁶ See, among others, Cartlidge (2011, 3), Archibald (2015, 172), Faletra (2014, 71).

⁷ For readings focussing on *Sadius* and *Galo* as calqued on vernacular (French) romance, see also Bennett (1941) and Hume (1975).

⁸ On this French-Latin, courtly-clerical cross-pollination, see, among others, Bate (1991), Putter (1995), Echard (1998), Archibald (2015), and Smith (2017, esp. 28–36).

Brooke and Mynors retain James's translation of *famina* as *jottings*, which conveys the term's connotations of inconsequentiality. It fails however to capture the orality of the term, which might also be translated as *chatterings* (< *famen*, *famina* < *fari*, *for*; to speak).⁹ Echard (1998, 20–21) also uses the term *jottings*, though the ambiguity of *famina* could support her argument that passages such as this one reveal an equivocation in *De nugis* between *lector* and *auditor*.

Smith (2017) has done much to revise the modern image of Walter from a 'careless anecdotist' (62) into a careful textual reviser, and passages such as this one show Walter concealing his own assiduity behind a careful performance of ineptitude. Indeed, despite its claims to rusticity, this is a highly worked passage: Walter elegantly constructs two extended metaphors — one of wood collecting, another of hunting — as figures for his conception of the reading encounter. The final sentence is also textured with consonance and alliteration. Here, Walter seems to be toying with his audience, feigning incompetence in terms designed to show off his cleverness. In short, such a passage is very much in line with Echard's assertion that 'Latin writers are sometimes simply having fun' (1998, 237). Yet, when pitched against the received notions of Latinate authority detailed above, Walter's representation of his writing process may have even wider-reaching implications. What he seems to be saying is that Latin is simply another *kind* of vernacular, apt for relating not only great philosophy, history, and theology, but also inconsequential, gossipy *famina*, *nugae* that are (or so Walter claims) unsophisticated, unpolished, and unfinished. The two-way vernacular-Latin leakage that produces and is embodied by *De nugis* is here further thematised within it: Latin is as much the realm of beasts as it is of cooked meat.

However, for all that Latin has been considered the supralocal language *par excellence* — the supposed gateway to widespread Latinate textual networks — the manuscript dissemination of *De nugis* is, as outlined in Chapter 1, slight. In fact, in what is perhaps a reference to other vernacular works that Walter may have authored, Gerald of Wales reports Walter's critique of Gerald's own *scripta* (*Opera*, v, 410–11). According to Walter, Gerald's works reach fewer people and earn him fewer rewards because they are in Latin (*quia Latina, paucioribus evidentia*; v, 411), as opposed to Walter's own more readily accessible, vernacular *verba/dicta*. Perhaps Walter's own Latin *scriptum*, the *De nugis*, has fallen foul of the very critique he levels at Gerald.

⁹ For example, Phillip W. Damon (1953) translates the Hiberno-Latin *Hisperica Famina* as the 'Occidental Talkitudes'.

The problem of restricted Latinate audiences is one that other medieval vernacular writers address head on. It is present, for example, in the text of the *Purgatoire Saint Patrice* copied in part by the Ludlow scribe in Harley 273:

Une merueile vueil descrivre
 Je su requis, ne l'os dedire
 De latin la dei estrere
 E pur lais en romanz fere (f. 191v, ll. 7–10)

I wish to describe a marvel; I have been asked, and dare not refuse; I must draw it from Latin and put it into romance for lay people.

The implication here is that, in translating his text into *romans*, the translator opens the text up to a wider audience (i.e. the *lais* who may also have been the ones who requested the translation in the first place).

The problem is also addressed by Walter's Herefordian acquaintance, Hue de Rotelande, in his prologue to *Ipomedon*, which is worth quoting at length:

Moult me mervail de ces clers sages
 Ky entendent plusurs langages,
 K'il ont lessee ceste estorie,
 Ke mise ne l'ont en memorie.
 Ne di pas qe il bien ne dit
 Cil qi en latin l'ad descript,
 Mes plus i ad leis ke lettrez ;
 Si li latin n'est translatez
 Gaires n'i erent entendanz ;
 Por ceo voil dire en romanz
 A plus brefment que jeo savrai,
 Si entendrunt e clerc e lai.
 Hue de Rotelande nus dit,
 Ky cest' estorie nous descrit,
 Ky de latin velt romanz fere
 Ne lui deit l'em a mal retrere
 S'il ne poet tuz ses cas garder,
 De tut en tut les tens former ;
 Mes pur hastiver la matire
 Nos estovra par biau motz dire ;
 Ffors la verroure n'y acrestrai
 Dirai brefment ceo qe jeo en sai. (ll. 21–42)

Much do I marvel at these wise clerks, who understand several languages, that they have left this (hi)story, that they have not committed it to memory. I do not say that he does not speak true, who has recounted it in Latin, but there are more laypeople than educated. If the Latin is not translated, they will barely understand it. For this reason I wish to tell (it) in romance as briefly as I can, so that both clerk and layman might understand. Hue de Rotelande tells us, who recounts this (hi)story, who wishes to make romance of Latin, that no-one should blame him if he cannot keep all its cases, form its tenses from beginning to end. But to hasten the matter, we will need to speak with pretty words. I shall not expand beyond the truth; I will briefly tell you what I know about it.

Ian Short (2009, 158–59, 167) is undoubtedly right to situate Hue's prologue in what he describes as a wider transference of textual authority from Latin to the vernacular over the course of the twelfth century. Hue must have had a passable clerical education, and his works betray his familiarity with classroom texts like the *Aeneid* and Statius's *Thebaid*. Yet, as several critics have noted, Hue's

relationship to the Latin *auctores* is — like Walter’s relationship with courtly romance — marked by irony and satire.¹⁰ So much is visible even in this brief prologue, in which Hue’s claim for a Latin original of his text is, as Short (2009, 161) puts it, ‘aimed at investing his text with a false authority’. No such source — or no such *single* source — for *Ipomedon* exists. Like so many medieval poets, Hue is a translator only in the transformative sense of ANT: his process of textual production is one that actively reworks, rewrites, and reorganises Latin and vernacular sources into what are ultimately original narratives. As Gaston Paris noted of Hue’s works in 1907, ‘l’invention y tient plus de place que les thèmes traditionnels’ (123; invention holds a greater place [in Hue’s works] than traditional themes).

Key to the shift in authority from Latin to French, however, is the question of audience raised by Walter Map above, for Hue’s prologue is unambiguous on one point: the primary reason for Hue’s selection of the French vernacular is so that more people might hear his work — the *leis* (laypeople) who are much more numerous (*plus i ad*) than the *lettrez* (those with a Latinate education). Crucially, writing in French entails less a *change* of audience than an expansion and diversification of it: Hue writes in French so that ‘entrendrunt e clerke e lai’ (*both clerk and layperson will understand*). The interest of writing in French lies, in short, in its wider social reach. In keeping with the findings of the recent scholarly works discussed in Introduction (§4.A), for Hue the Latinate ‘European community *avant la lettre*’ is actually restricted to a clerical elite, in place of which a more properly supralocal *lingua franca* might, instead, be French.

As with Map’s *famina*, the prologue’s metatextual discussion of its own language use is further dramatised in Hue’s texts themselves, where language — in particular, French — is frequently represented as key to the supralocal networks in which, as we saw in Chapter 2, these Marcher texts embed their localities. The networking capacities of French, for example, are dramatised by a remarkable series of scenes in *Protheselaus* featuring a character called Latin, the Pucele’s *conestable* (chief of household) who is first described to us thus:

Latins ot non, il ert senez
Et curteis e de halt lignage,
Debonaire e de franc corage
E hardiz e de grant vistesce. (ll. 6548–51).

Latin was his name, he was a wise man, and courtly and of high lineage, gentle and of frank courage, and bold and of great agility.

¹⁰ On Walter’s satire on romance, see Cartlidge (2011, 7–9), Smith (2017, 34–35). On Hue’s relationship with Latin *auctores*, see Kocher (2008, 439), Vinot (2009, 34).

Perhaps the most obvious way of interpreting Latin's name is as a reference to Latin as a language. Indeed, we might read this passage's account of Latin's nobility and wisdom ('Tut li unt muntré lor secrei', l. 6555; all have shown him their innermost thoughts) as describing Latin itself, which, remembering Szpiech's typology, brokered an authoritative status on imperial, cultural, and religious grounds. Yet, it must not be forgotten that *latin* in medieval romance languages did not necessarily refer to the language of Latin; it could simply designate *a* language, dialect, or utterance, often one not understood by the speaker. Thus, in troubadour lyric we frequently hear of birds singing *en lor lati*, a phrase that appears in the works of Guilhem IX, Cercamon, Marcabru, and Arnaut Daniel.¹¹ Similarly, a *latiner* was a translator or interpreter between languages that did not necessarily include Latin.¹² *Latin* was also a term used to designate the inhabitants of (usually north-western) Europe by speakers from elsewhere.¹³

Like a *latiner*, Latin's primary narrative function in *Protheselaus* is to act as a go-between for Protheselaus and the Pucele de l'Isle. Given this role, Latin appears as a loquacious character; his toing and froing between the Pucele and Protheselaus marks the text with high levels of his direct speech. At no point, however, is there any mention of Latin actually translating the words of either Protheselaus or the Pucele. One reason for this may be that all of the linguistic interactions in this section of the text actually occur in various forms of French or, at least, mutually intelligible forms of gallo-romance. Indeed, the characters in question are, in the context of twelfth-century linguistic geography, all likely to be able to speak some kind of French, whether as native or acquired language. Protheselaus, as an educated southern Italian noble, is probable able to speak French. Equally, it might be possible to identify the Pucele's land of Moriane/Moriene with Maurienne in Savoy, which fits with what we are told about her domain over the course of the romance (i.e. that it lies to the north of Lombardy and borders on Ismeine's Burgundy). If so, then we might imagine Moriane as perhaps a Franco-Provençal region, where mutual intelligibility with Italian/Sicilian French-speakers may have been a possibility; that said, given her high social status, the Pucele might well be imagined to be able to speak French outright without the need to rely on mutual intelligibility. Similarly, Latin is strongly connected to a francophone identity insofar as he is frequently described as *li francs*: 'li franc Latins' (l. 7013); 'Latin

¹¹ *AND*, 'latin' s. 2, 3. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/latin>. On the phrase *en lor lati* in troubadour lyric, see Davis (2015).

¹² *AND*, 'latimer' s. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/latimer>.

¹³ See, for example, in the *Devisement du monde*, where Kublai invites the Polo brothers 'por ce ke jamés ne avoient veu nul latin en celle contree' (iv, 5–6; because he had never before seen a Latin in this country) (cited in Gaunt 2013, 122–23).

le francs' (l. 10918); 'li francs Latins' (l. 8381). Given the lack of capitalisation and the possibility of scribal interference, it is difficult to distinguish *francs* (meaning, as an adjective, *honest*, and as a substantive, *free person*) from *Francs* (meaning a *Frankish* or *French person*).¹⁴

There is much to untangle here. For one, in the eastern Mediterranean, both *franc* and *latin* might loosely mean *European*. But if Moriane is in Savoy, why would Latin require marking out from the other protagonists as European? Similarly, the superimposition of timeframes leads to ambiguity: *Francs* as *Frank* makes sense for the classical setting of the narrative, but in Hue's twelfth-century and the later centuries of *Protheselaus*'s reception, the connection between *Francs* and *Frenchman* cannot be overlooked. As such, *li francs Latins* might be read with *francs* as an *epitheton ornans* meaning *the honest/free Latin* or *the Frankish/French Latin* or, indeed, with *Latins* as a noun in apposition to *Francs* (*the Frank, Latin, or the Frenchman, Latin*). Whatever the reading, the ambiguity is enough for each meaning to inflect the other, and the air of Frenchness conjured up by the persistent *francs* can never be fully dispelled. Indeed, the intimacy of this association is emphatic: there are no other characters in *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus* who are referred to epithetically with any consistency (only La Fiere, who has no other name). For most characters in Hue's texts, we learn of their origins in a casual manner, often long after their first appearance (like Ismeine in *Ipomedon*, or Melander in *Protheselaus*). Therefore, it is possible that, just as Hue declares his intention to make romance of Latin in the *Ipomedon* prologue (*de latin velt romanz fere*), so too does he in *Protheselaus* go some way towards making a Frenchman of Latin himself.

Latin *li francs* is, it turns out, anything but honest: he shamelessly misrepresents his mistress's words and desires, lets Protheselaus out of his tower so that he may join the very battle designed to rescue him, and, along with the rest of the Pucele's entourage, encourages the Pucele in shifting her affections to Melander instead, thus bringing about the end of the war. Like the translations of ANT, Latin as *porte-parole* does not simply transport causality, carrying out the Pucele's intentions; rather, these are radically transformed in translation. Thus, we have here an image of language use — more specifically, of French — that runs counter to the designs of a hegemonic power (i.e. the orders of the Pucele). I will develop this point more fully in the next section in relation to *Fouke* and the Harley Lyrics, but it is worth flagging up here the representation of a protagonist defying authority via

¹⁴ On the first, see: *AND*, 'franc¹', a. 1., s. 1. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/franc%5B1%5D>. On the second, see: *AND*, 'Franc³', s. and. a. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/Franc%5B3%5D>.

subversive language acts in French. Just as, in the *Ipomedon* prologue, Hue proclaimed himself unable to translate his Latin source faithfully, to retain its *cas* and *tens*, so too does Latin mistranslate his mistress, compromising her claim to sovereign agency.

Nor is Latin the only French-speaker in Hue's texts. As Hue retroactively projects twelfth-century linguistic geography onto the world of his texts, the antique Mediterranean emerges as populated by francophones. In *Ipomedon*, several native French-speakers attend La Fiere's tourney, including Nestor (the Norman Duke), Dirceus (the count of Flanders), and Daires (the king of Lorraine, brother to Atreus the French king, who appears later in the text). Similarly, Ismeine turns out to be a potentially native French-speaker, as the daughter of the duke of Burgundy, and her husband the Apulian Tholomeu undoubtedly acquires some skill in the language in order to rule over his wife's lands. Indeed, we might assume that the aristocratic networks of the Italo- and Siculo-Norman Mediterranean are also imagined to be French-speaking: *Ipomedon*, La Fiere, Meleager, and Capaneus would thus also qualify as French-speakers, as would their courts and households. Similarly, if we accept that Moriane is imagined as a francophone region, then not only the Pucele but all her company would be French-speakers, including Evein, Orias, Florence, Atanas, Boas, Eurimedon, Minos, and, of course, our old friend Latin. Later again in *Protheselaus*, Jubar is revealed as a French baron's son (l. 1419), and the Cretan messenger Jonas may also speak French in some capacity since we are told he 'saveit de plusurs langages' (l. 7410; knew many languages). Similarly, when Protheselaus reaches the court of the French King, there is no mention of language barriers or the need for translators; but then, there would be none, if he, like his parents before him, were a French-speaker.

French is everywhere in *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus*. It is represented as spoken by heterogeneous communities and individuals across Europe, by native speakers and by speakers who acquire it as second or third language, by speakers primarily of noble stock, but also of lower-aristocratic and professional classes whose Latin education might have been limited (Latin, although *de halt lignage*, is the Pucele's warden and advisor, Jonas is a messenger, etc.). This representation of French as widely spoken on both social and geographic spectra is fully in keeping both with the scholarship discussed in the Introduction (§4.A) and with *Ipomedon*'s own prologue, which casts composing in French as a democratisation of access to narrative. Indeed, we might frame the three later English translations of *Ipomedon* (see Chapter 1), beginning in the 1390s, in a similar manner, making the French-language narrative available to what were, by then, largely Anglophone audiences.

Hue's texts prompt us, then, not only to reassess the status of French as a marker of *social* hegemony, at least in the late twelfth-century, but also its status as a marker of *political* hegemony. If, as we saw in Chapter 2, Hue's texts work to connect his local environment into a geography whose networks range from Ireland to Russia, then what is made clear by the above discussion is that French, not Latin, is key to those networks. Moreover, the French-language networks are never coterminous with a single, monolithic, francophone power, certainly not any insular one. There is perhaps a latent political point here that is worth drawing out. In both textually dramatising and metatextually thematising his translating of Latin into French, Hue marks out his place in a network of French-speaking territories to which the 'peripheral' poet represents his work as available and connected. I argued in Chapters 1 and 2 that these networks — imagined *in the texts themselves* as stretching from Credenhill to Calabria, from the March to the Mediterranean — fundamentally decentre the insular hegemony. What the discussion in this chapter has found is that that decentring hinges on the supralocalism of French.

4.2. *Sage est qe parle sagement*: Ludlow, c. 1310–c. 1350

If French is key to the networked worlds of *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus*, then it is no less significant to the world of *Fouke le Fitz Waryn* and to its political programme. We have seen how Hue de Rotelande's map of supralocal francophone networks might be read politically as a decentring of the French-speaking insular hegemony. In this section we will see this point pushed further by *Fouke*, in which the supralocalism of French facilitates much of the hero's networking with other power centres beyond the remit of Angevin England, and even, in fact, in open opposition to it. As we will see, it is mastery of French that enables characters in *Fouke* and several of the Harley Lyrics to mock, deceive, and sometimes even destroy their hegemonic, royal foes in ways that raise probing questions regarding how we think about the relationships between language and political ideology.

It is clear that French provides a support for *Fouke*'s alliance with Welsh powers. Dolmans (2016) makes the point that the members of the aristocracy of Wales and England are united by *Fouke*'s representation of 'their common interests, shared characteristics, and similar backgrounds' (122), and she is right to focus in on the figure of Lewys (Llywelyn ap Iorwerth) as a key example. She fails to mention, however, that French and insular francophone culture are crucial to these 'similar backgrounds', and that Llywelyn is represented as thoroughly integrated in the francophone world of

the twelfth-century insular aristocracy. He is represented as a knight (*sire*; 33 l. 27) — a post-1066 Norman import — and his name is suitably Gallicised. His domestic sphere and education are francophone and cross-cultural: he grew up at Henry II's French-speaking court, and is married to the Angevin princess Joan (33, ll. 28–30). The text also seems to imagine French as the language of interaction between Fouke and Llywelyn, and presumably Fouke and Gwenwynwyn, unless Fouke is proficient enough to handle such delicate diplomacy in Welsh, which seems unlikely.

There may be several reasons for this 'Frenchification' of Wales and its rulers, the first being that it does, to a certain extent, reflect reality. Llywelyn probably could speak some French, given, for example, his marriage to Joan (see Lloyd-Morgan 2008, 162). Similarly, we must also remember the years that had intervened between the text's setting (in 1200–1203), its composition in the 1270s, and its copying (and *mise en prose*) in Royal 12 C XII by the Ludlow scribe in c. 1325–27 and c. 1333–35. By the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the interpenetration of Welsh- and French-speaking cultures had become even more marked than it had been in 1200 (see Introduction §3b, §4b, Ch1 §3).

Of course, the protagonist Lewys is by no means an accurate depiction of the historical Llywelyn. Llywelyn did not, for instance, grow up at the court of Henry II, and his political relationships with Gwenwynwyn and Fulk were much more turbulent than this text admits. Similarly, Gwenwynwyn, for his part, allied himself by turns with Llywelyn against John (as in 1202 and 1211), by others with John against Llywelyn (as in 1210 and 1216). A mere twenty years after the period covered by *Fouke*, Llywelyn himself took the Shropshire castles of Kinnerley and Whittington.

There is, however, a political point at stake in *Fouke*'s representations of the Welsh and their leaders as French-speakers participating so fully in a French-based culture. Throughout *Fouke*, the Welsh emerge as natural Marcher allies due to their shared opposition to the English crown, both in the context of Fouke's rebellion against John, and of Roger's rebellion against Edward II. One of the key catalysts for Roger's rebellion was, after all, the unlawful execution by Hugh the Younger Despenser of the *uchelwr* Llywelyn Bren, whom we met in Chapter 1 as the owner of *.i. roman de la rose* (Mortimer [2003] 2010, 76, 87–88, 100). It is, therefore, politically expedient for the Ludlow Scribe to steep the fourteenth-century convergence of anti-Edwardian Marcher and Welsh interests in a history that conveniently smoothes over the bitter battles and conflicts that also marked Marcher-Welsh relations at the turn of the thirteenth century. In this, Lewys, the francophone Welsh warlord, very

much fits the bill. As a Welsh leader whose cultural, linguistic, and political difference from his Marcher Lord neighbours has been all but eliminated, Lewys provides the ideal image on which to hang this politicised historical fiction of Marcher-Welsh coalition.

French performs a similarly networking function in the episode of Johan de Raunpayne's Greek disguise. The text relates that, on arriving in London, Johan acquaints himself with the mayor and his household, lavishing them with gifts and conversing with them. Although none of these conversations are related in direct speech, we are told that the language in which he speaks is *latyn corrupt*: 'E quanqu'il parla fust latyn corrupt, mes le meir le entendi bien' (56, ll. 16–17; although what he spoke was corrupt Latin, the mayor understood him well). Similarly, when Johan is conveyed to the king, we are told that: '(...) le marchant mout courtoisement ly salua en son langage. Le roi l'entendi bien, e demaunda qui il ert e dont vint' (56, ll. 19–20; the merchant greeted him very courteously in his language. The king understood him well, and asked who he was and where he came from). Although Fouke and his men travel to Wales, France, Cartagena, and North Africa with no mention of requiring translators, the notion of corrupt Latin only occurs at one other, earlier moment in the romance, when Fouke and his company arrive at an island near Orkney, where they battle a band of Viking-like pirates.¹⁵ Their first encounter on the island is with a 'juve[n]cel gardant berbis' (43, l. 14; a boy minding sheep) who greets them 'de un latyn corumpus' (43, ll. 15–16; in a corrupt Latin).

Again, there is much to untangle here. For one, the terms *latyn corrupt* and *latyn corumpus* are highly idiosyncratic ones.¹⁶ For another, as we have already seen in this chapter, *latin* need not necessarily refer to the Latin language; indeed, as we will see shortly, there are many reasons in these two instances for why it probably does not. At best, the notion of corrupt, broken Latin might narrow down the list of possible candidate languages to romance vernaculars. So, what are Johan and the shepherd speaking?

The first point to make is that the two may not be speaking the *same* language. The second is that they may not be speaking a language, or a single language, in any such narrow sense. Rather, I think it is probable that the merchant and shepherd are speaking composite languages, a form of 'merchant-speak', a kind of creole, pidgin, or *lingua franca* made up of various vernaculars, the usage

¹⁵ After their encounter with the young shepherd boy, he leads them to his companions, who are armed with clubs. They look like humble peasants (ll. 26–27), yet it turns out that they have somehow accumulated a huge amount of costly garments and objects (ll. 31–33), and have abducted seven maidens (44, l. 15), including the daughter of Aunflor, lord of Orkney (l. 19).

¹⁶ *AND* cites only *Fouke* as attesting to the meaning of *latyn corrupt* and *latyn corumpus*, which it glosses as 'jargon, debased Latin'. See: *AND*, 'latin' s. 3. *latin corrupu, latin corrupt*. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/latin>

of which may not extend beyond their own community or kinship group.¹⁷ Indeed, the use of the indefinite article in ‘un latyn corumpus’ perhaps underscores the idiosyncrasy of the shepherd’s mode of communication.

However, it also seems to me most probable that these forms of ‘merchant-speak’, for both Johan de Raunpayne’s ‘merchant’ and the Viking-like shepherd, are primarily based on French. It is, for example, unlikely that a Scandinavian peasant would be able to converse in Latin, even bad Latin. Given their base on a North Sea isle three days from Scotland, the shepherd and his piratic brethren might well be imagined as speakers of Gaelic or Norse, though they might also have acquired vocabularies, phrases, or even basic proficiencies in other vernaculars used in the seaports they frequent or the lands they invade. Remembering the work of scholars like Kowaleski (2009) on identifying French as a common seafaring *argot*, it seems that French might well be included as one such vernacular, if not the main one, acquired by the shepherd and his kin. Moreover, in the context of the encounter between the *juvencel* and Fouke’s band, French seems a good candidate as the basis of the boy’s speech for two reasons. First is its supralocalism: on witnessing these foreigners descend from their ship, the shepherd might reasonably opt for a language in which he is most likely to be understood, which would point to French. Second is its prestige value. It does not seem impossible that the shepherd would recognise Fouke and his men as superior in social class: after all, they began their voyage by taking ‘grant richesse e vitaille’ (43, ll. 3–4) from the ship they vanquished, and have since spent a year successfully pirating the shores of England (43, ll. 6–8). Thus, when addressing ‘les chevalers’ (43, l. 15), the shepherd might attempt to greet them (*les salua*) in the highest-prestige language in his repertoire, which might again point to French.

There are also several arguments in favour of French as the basis for the *latin corrupt* of Johan de Raunpayne’s merchant. In the meeting with the king, the possessive pronoun in ‘en *son* langage’ (my emphasis) is ambiguous: it might refer to the king’s language (i.e. French), or to the merchant’s (i.e. Greek), or to Johan’s (i.e. French again). It is highly unlikely that the king — or the disguised Johan — would be able to speak Greek, so presumably *son* refers to French, spoken by them both: we are, after all, dealing with an insular king and a nobleman at the turn of the thirteenth century. We are

¹⁷ The notions of pidgin and creole languages are often considered in terms of European colonialism, though they have also been productively explored by historical linguists analysing medieval language contact and *lingua franca*. See, for example, Minervini (1996) and, in creolisation in a Middle English context, Trotter (2012b). For excellent explorations of merchant multilingualism, see Hsy (2013, esp. 157–93), Trotter (2011a; 2011b), and Tiddeman (2016).

told, moreover, that the merchant speaks *courtoisement*, which suggests a level of proficiency in the language, and also perhaps points to French as the standard courtly idiom in Angevin England. Finally, within the context of John's disguise, a Latin-speaking Greek merchant would make for an unlikely persona: why and how would a merchant-class trader from the eastern Mediterranean arrive in London speaking the language of ecclesiastic and aristocratic elites? A merchant speaking a French layered with other vernaculars is much more in keeping with Johan's cover story. Thus, although Johan de Raunpayne's language is not revealed to us in direct speech, we have here a scene in which a man attempts to give the illusion of foreignness in a language in which he is fully proficient: he might pepper it with loanwords, Greek words (if he knows any), Italianisms, Occitanisms, or *Oltremarismi* (that his character may have acquired on his travels).¹⁸ Even in terms of his performance, one might easily imagine Johan altering his accent, mannerisms, gestures, clothing: this is a staged, almost farcical moment, where the laugh is wholly on the king.

If this reading holds, then it is significant that it is in a kind of French that Johan deceives John, that royal authority is magnificently flouted, and that Fouke's brother is covertly recovered. The allure of the merchant's commercial networks — which would themselves have extended through francophone sea-lanes, ports, and fairs — is communicated *in French* in order to outfox the king. As in *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus*, French in this romance is key to the supralocal networks it charts, and that supralocalism, especially in *Fouke*, has a subversive political edge: it allows Fouke to resist the king by travelling to regions like Gwynedd and Île-de-France, as well as to infiltrate London itself. As in *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus*, French in *Fouke* cannot be considered politically monolithic, reserved for the politically hegemonic; rather it is spoken in all its heterogeneity as a first, acquired, and composite language by speakers from the North Sea to (or so Johan would have us believe) Greece.

Aside from *Fouke*, a number of the works copied by the Ludlow scribe in Harley 2253 also provide highly politicised representations of the use of French. I will, for the sake of space, discuss here only three texts: the French-language *Le Jongleur d'Ely et le roi d'Angleterre*, the macaronic Latin-French *Against the King's Taxes*, and the English-language *King Horn*.

¹⁸ For a similar example of self-foreignising language in a very different context, we might look to Raimbaut de Vaqueiras's famous *descort*, *Eras quan vey verdeyar*. In order to give the illusion of multilingual singing, the poet/singer inflects his native Occitan with the morphological, phonetic, and orthographic characteristics from various other romance vernaculars in ways perhaps not dissimilar to what Johan might be doing to his own French in this scene. On Raimbaut's techniques see Wright (2005) and Hagman (2006).

Le Jongleur d'Ely et le roi d'Angleterre (art. 75) has shown an impressive ability to confound modern genre classification. Joseph Bédier (1895, 34) placed it on the border between a *fabliau* and a moral *dit*. Most recently, Barbara Nolan (2000, 303) resorts to calling it a 'lai-cum-fabliau-cum-dialogue-cum-exemplum'. Whatever the preferred classification, the text's generic hybridity befits the multi-generic, multilingual Harley 2253, just as its mockery of royal authority befits the regionalist political programme of the codex. The text itself relates the exchange between a *jongleur* and the English King, where the former deliberately misunderstands the latter's words, bamboozling, insulting, and ultimately counselling him, in ways that draw attention to the capacity of French to speak truth to power.

During the exchange, the speech of the *jongleur* is full of wilful misunderstandings, paradoxes, contradictions, truisms, non-sequiturs, and tautologies that, as Nolan (2000, 196–304) notes, are often ribald in nature. A number of them, however, specifically play on the homophony and polysemy of several insular French words. Lines 31–32, for example, see the *jongleur* twist the king's use of the verb *apeler* meaning *to call* as in *name* and as in *beckon*: when the king asks what the water is called, the *jongleur* replies: “‘L'em ne l'apele pas, eynz vient tous jours” (l. 32; ‘One does not call it, but it always comes’). Next, the *jongleur* plays on the homophony of *vet* as the third person singular form of both *voir* (to see) and *aler* (to go). When the king asks if the horse goes well, the *jongleur* replies: “‘Oil, pis de nuit que de jours” (l. 52; ‘Yes, worse at night than in the day’). Later, he plays on the possible direct objects of the verb *trere*, a transitive verb meaning *to draw*, both as in a cart and an arrow. Thus, when the king asks if the horse can draw, the *jongleur* replies “‘D’arke ne d’arblastre, ne siet il rien” (l. 67; ‘Of bow or crossbow he knows nothing’). He then riffs on the homophony of *ambler* meaning *to amble along* and *embler* meaning *to get away*. When the king asks if the horse ambles well along, the *jongleur* replies: “‘Yl ne fust unqe de larcyn pris” (l. 74; ‘He was never arrested for theft’). Finally, the *jongleur* exploits the homophony of *seinz* (healthy) and *seintz* (holy, saintly), answering the king's inquiry into the horse's health with the statement: “‘Seintz n'est il mie, ce sachez bien, | Car, si il fust seintz, ne fust pas mien” (ll. 84–85; ‘He is in no way saintly, know this well, for if he were saintly, he would not be mine’). The *jongleur*'s linguistic pyrotechnics end with a shift into Latin expressing the *vérité*: “‘Medium tenuere beati” (l. 399; Blessed be he who holds the middle path).

Although one can imagine this text making for, apart from anything else, a very funny performance, the *jongleur*'s flippancy also constitutes a more substantial commentary on language and power. R. Howard Bloch (1986, 15) interprets the text as a 'Beckett-like encounter' that showcases poetry's refusal 'to specify its own origin, its destination, or even its own object'. I agree that the scene underlines the slipperiness of language, but would add that this exposition is grounded in a very specific encounter, between protagonists engaged in a specific power relation, and it plays on semantic and phonological peculiarities specific to French. Put differently: it is the *jongleur*'s superior mastery over French that enables him to criticise the king without repercussion or reprimand. Quite literally, French is the language both of hegemony and of its subversion, of the king and the *jongleur*, with real power lying with the one who uses it best: 'Sage est qe parle sagement; | Fol, come parle folement' (ll. 404–5; Wise is he who speaks wisely; foolish, who speaks foolishly). In short, foolish is as foolish speaks.

Against the King's Taxes (art. 114) offers another interesting example that integrates the macaronic blurring of Latin and French with the scribe's regional politics. With its composition dated to c. 1337–40, and its copying to 1339–40 (Revard 2000, 62–64), this poem is a highly contemporary critique of the levy imposed on wool exports by Edward III in c. 1337–40 in order to raise funds for the Hundred Years' War. As Scattergood (2000, 166–67) notes, there are clerical and populist agendas at work in this poem, but its inclusion in Harley 2253 also plays to regional objections to interventions of the English government that adversely affected the prosperity of Marcher territories.

Fein (2015a, iii, 361) and Scattergood (2000) argue that this poem does not constitute an attack on the king, but on his officials and the upper classes more generally. Scattergood categorically states: 'there is no criticism of the king' (165). Yet, it is surely more accurate to say that there is *only* criticism of the king, given the poem's relentless attacks on his government's fiscal, foreign, and domestic policies. Within the context of Harley 2253, moreover, the poem associatively refers back to the intra-network of political poems: as Fein (2015a, iii, 361) notes, its interest in the wool trade links it to *The Flemish Insurrection* (art. 48); its investment in the politics of 1340–41 links it to *The Song of Trailbaston* (art. 80); and its resentment of unfair taxation links it to *Song of the Husbandman* (art. 31). Even its form — based on 'the goliardic stanza "cum auctoritas"' (Scattergood 2000, 163) — draws on a satirical tradition in which clerics criticised the practices of the organised Church. This poetic form,

innovated for internal religious critique, has here been retooled and secularised as a criticism of royal governance.

The arguments of Fein and Scattergood make much of the opening stanza, with its praising of the king and prayers for his wellbeing. There is a sense, however, that even here such sentiments are little more than formalities. In a poem that so clearly disapproves of the king's current policies, one can almost detect a hint of irony in the three subjunctives repetitively used to wish him health and to curse his advisors, or at least a sense of going through the motions. Already by the second stanza, the poet is lecturing that kings should not wage wars without their peoples' consent (ll. 11–14), and by the end of stanza 5 there is unambiguous resentment in Latin of the king's appropriation of what is now referred to as the speaker's *own* wool: 'Non est lex sana | Quod regi sit *mea* lana!' (ll. 49–50, my emphasis; It is no just law that the king should have *my* wool).

It is, more specifically, in the poem's macaronic linguistic mode that is couched a virulent critique of the socio-political elite. The poem takes the form of seventeen ten-line stanzas of the rhyme scheme ABABCBCBDD of alternating French and Latin, with the final couplet in Latin alone. The lines are not, however, discrete and self-contained; rather, phrases are generally constructed over quatrains that code-switch between Latin and French with no syntactic or semantic break. For example, in a phrase whose macaronic syntax completes the French future modal verbs *vodera* and *purra* with the Latin perfect infinitives *cepisse* and *invenisse*, stanza 7 makes it clear that the poet sees the king alone as desiring the profits from the wool tax, and advises him to seek the money from among the rich instead: 'Depus que le roy vodera | Tam multum cepisse, | Entre les riches si purra | Satis invenisse' (ll. 61–64; Since the king wants to take so much, he could find enough from among the rich).

Another macaronic phrase in stanza 8 describes the king thus: 'Le roy est jeovene bachiler, | Nec habet etatem | Nulle malice compasser, | Set omnem probitatem' (ll. 75–78; The king is a young man, not of an age to scheme any malice, but possesses all honesty). Here, the French infinitive *compasser* is used to complete syntactically the Latin possessive *habet etatem*, itself possibly influenced by the vernacular possessive construction of the verb *to have* with an accusative direct object (*etatem*), rather than the Latin dative possessive. Both Fein (2015a, iii, 361) and Scattergood (2000, 165) describe this passage as exculpating the king. However, these lines, like those of the first stanza, have an almost patronising ring to them, and smack somewhat of irony, as if suggesting that the

king is too young and innocent to govern properly, incapable not just of plotting evil, but also — the text seems to imply — of achieving much good.

Finally, towards the end of the poem, in stanza 15, the poet constructs a hypothetical clause with the conjunction *si* and the conditional *freyt* (<*faire*), completed by the Latin imperfect subjunctive *vellem*, as a modal with the infinitive *laudare*. Through this construction the poet addresses the king in a consultative capacity, urging him to take the poet's advice and reconsider the tax: 'Si le roy freyt moun consail, | Tunc vellem laudare' (ll. 141–42; If the king would take my advice, then I would wish to praise [him]). It is perhaps worth lingering on the syntactically foregrounded *tunc*: then, and only then, would the poet consider praising the king. This line is a succinct example of this poem's politico-linguistic dynamics: the pairing of an ironic, injunctive, condemnatory tone with clever interweaving of Latin and French produces a poem that conceals its own critique. Ultimately, were the king himself to hear this song, he, like the king happening upon the Ely *jongleur*, might well be forgiven for failing to understand his interlocutor's scathing edge, whether because of its subtle irony, its linguistic acrobatics, or both.

A final representation of the counter-hegemonic potential of French is provided by an episode in the English-language text *King Horn* (art. 70). In order to enter the tidal castle in which Fikenild has imprisoned Horn's beloved Rymenild, Horn and his company disguise themselves as *jongleurs*: 'Men seide hit were harpeirs, | Jogelers, ant fythelers' (ll. 1489–90; It was said it was harpers, *jongleurs*, and fiddlers). Once inside, we are told that Horn strikes up a tune on his harp and sings a *lay* (l. 1499) to Rymenild, though it is not specified in which language Horn is imagined to be singing. One might assume Horn's song simply to match the language of the text in which it occurs (i.e. English). Similarly, if Horn's home in Suddene equates to southern England in the Anglo-Saxon past, then Horn probably speaks English.

Horn's *lay* is, however, not related to us in direct speech, and so the language in which it is sung remains up for debate. For one, even if it is set in the pre-Norman period, *Horn* as a text dates to the mid-thirteenth century, and its inclusion in the Harley MS dates to the mid-fourteenth, both periods when English princes would, in some capacity, have spoken French. Indeed, *King Horn* is itself a translation of a French-language source, with which, Fein (2015a, ii, 448) conjectures, *Horn*'s readership may also have been familiar. If audiences were aware of *Horn*'s status as translation from French, then perhaps all the renderings of its protagonists' speech would be imagined, metatextually, as

originally French. Another reason to question the language of Horn's song is that the *lay* form that Horn employs here is not particularly English in terms of the place, language, or timeframe of its popularity. According to Finlayson (1985) the *lay* seems to have been more popular on the continent, is more frequent in French than English, and appears from the twelfth-century onwards. Indeed, only eight extant Middle English texts have been classified as *lays* at all, and all date to the period between the mid-fourteenth and mid-fifteenth centuries (Finlayson 1985, 352). They thus postdate both *Horn's* diegetic context (pre-Norman England) and the context of its composition (mid-thirteenth century England). Finally, even Horn's disguise as a *jogeler* is overlaid with francophone connotations: the very noun derives from the French *jongleur*, a term designating a singer of primarily French-language songs to French-speaking courts.¹⁹ Therefore, despite the supposed Anglo-Saxon setting of *Horn* and its rendering in Middle English verse, several aspects of this scene — the period of *Horn's* composition and reception, its French source text, Horn's singing of a *lay*, his disguise as a *jongleur* — all conspire to haunt Horn's song with a distinct air of *francophonie*, perhaps to the extent that audiences of Harley 2253's English *Horn* text might imagine him to be singing in French.

Crucially, the French overlay of Horn's singing is every bit as significant as Johan de Raunpayne's use of French in his merchant disguise, since it garners Horn access to Fikenild's court and facilitates the climactic assassination:

He eode up to borde
Mid his gode suorde;
Fykenildes croune
He fel ther adoune (ll. 1507–10)

He went up to the table with his good sword; he there struck down Fikenild's head.

Admittedly, Fikenild is not technically king of Westnesse, but he is certainly the main antagonistic figure of authority, a kind of *de facto* king. He has manipulated the king so thoroughly as to be able to imprison his daughter, force her to marry him against her will, and authorise the costly building of the castle on the tidal island in which to do so. Indeed, Fikenild's royal status is figured in the noun *croune* that Horn strikes down (referring to Fikenild's head, but also signifying *crown*).²⁰ Horn then appoints Arnoldyn to follow Aylmer as king of Westnesse (ll. 1513–16).

Thus, French once again emerges in all its politically heterogeneous supralocalism: spoken from Suddene to Westnesse, it is by speaking French that Horn gets close to Fikenild, just as it

¹⁹ Fein translates *jogelers* as *jugglers* (Fein 2015a, ii, 367), but the *MED* records its primary sense of 'minstrel, harper, singer' (citing *Horn* as its first attestation), derived from Old French *jongleur*. See *MED*, 'jogelour' n. (1). <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED23872>

²⁰ *MED*, 'coroune' n. (10). <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED9794>

facilitates the encounters of the *jongleur d'Ely* with the *roy d'Angleterre*, and of Johan de Raunpayne with King John. And again, as in these other cases, French emerges as non-coterminous with any monolithic socio-political power. Ultimately, the texts discussed in this section might remind us of Manuel Castells's *network society*, with its supralocal networks appropriable not only by hegemonic elites, but also by counter-hegemonic groups. French, in these texts, is as much the domain of the subversive speaker as it is of the outplayed interlocutor, be he King John, the *roi d'Angleterre*, the royal tax inspector, or the ill-fated Fikenild.

4.3. 'yr holl ieithoed yssyd gennyf': Cwm Tawe, c. 1380–c. 1410

What, then, of Welsh? How is the Welsh language conceptualised in medieval works, and in particular in those circulating in Hopcyn's Glamorgan? What, politically, is at stake in translating between Welsh and other languages? Might there be scope for thinking about not only French, but also Welsh in networked terms?

The dominant conceptualisation of Welsh, in both modern and medieval contexts, is as a local language, geographically circumscribed by the borders of Wales, where its first-language communities primarily reside. Similarly, the Red Book and the activities of its scribes have been characterised as 'antiquarian', monolingually preserving native narrative traditions for later generations and posterity. Helen Fulton (2015b), for instance, writes that, where the Red Book 'seems antiquarian in its design' (332), a manuscript like Peniarth 50 — containing contemporary texts and political prophecies in English, Latin, and Welsh (see Ch1 §4) — is 'up to date' (332) and 'announces itself as a modern manuscript' (339).

Such a summation seems to me to give rather short shrift to the political edge of the Red Book. Julia Crick (2010, 23) has aptly written that: 'In late-thirteenth-century Wales not just the production, but the writing down of texts became a process heavy with political significance.' Such a statement might equally — if not especially — apply to late fourteenth-century Glamorgan. In the context of the asymmetry in English-Welsh power relations that, as we have seen, marked Hopcyn's Glamorgan, particularly in the build-up to the Glyndŵr rebellion, such 'antiquarianism' cannot be devoid of political significance. Rees Davies ([1987] 2000b, 434–36; 1996, 45–47) has suggested that it was an 'ideology of disinheritance' that motivated the copying of Welsh historical and literary texts and the translating of Latin histories into Welsh. Indeed, Fulton herself has written elsewhere that

secular patrons' 'support of literature in Welsh was a direct response to the growing power of England' (2011b, 199), and she turns to Hopcyn ap Tomas as a prime example. Thus, both the writing down of native oral material and the translation of widely circulating Latin and French texts into Welsh must be understood as politicised projects: the first preserves native narrative traditions; the second granted Welsh-language communities access to supralocal textual networks and to the literary tastes and courtly ideologies that they disseminated.

It is important to note that, unlike English, Welsh was never displaced as prestige discourse in Wales, largely because of the Welsh language's own internal diglossia. As Fulton (2011a, 157) notes, the Welsh literary *koinē* prevented French from usurping it as a learned discourse (whereas English had no such competing register). Similarly, Bronagh Ní Chonaill (2010, 81) has underlined the extent to which *Cyfraith Hywel* served as a great support for native Welsh linguistic and cultural identity: it existed independently of English or Marcher legal systems, stemmed from local Welsh communities, and was so dependent on first-language Welsh fluency that non-native speakers were forbidden to act as guarantors in legal proceedings. Welsh, in other words, occupied a very different position vis-à-vis the French of the hegemonic power in England than did English itself.

Yet, although critics have successfully asserted the enduring prestige status of Welsh in Wales, its claims to supralocalism remain somewhat overlooked. Such credentials of Welsh were explored by Gerald of Wales, who, drawing on Galfridian historiography, characterised Welsh as the contemporary inheritor of the language of Troy, inflected by the Trojans' long sojourn in Greece. In the *Itinerarium*, Gerald maps the common heritage of the word *water* in Latin, Greek and Welsh, and of *salt* in Greek, Welsh, Irish, Latin, French, English, and German. He singles out the Welsh word, explaining that, because the Britons sojourned in Greece after the fall of Troy, their language is 'in multis Græco idiomati conformis' (i.8, 77; *Opera*, vi; similar to Greek in many ways). This etymological interest also surfaces in the *Descriptio*, where Gerald lists Greek/Welsh and Latin/Welsh cognates, arguing that 'verba linguæ Britannicæ omnia fere vel Græco conveniunt vel Latino' (i.15, 194; *Opera*, vi; almost all the words of the language of the Britons are cognate with either Greek or Latin). Yet, it is not only with Greek and Latin that Welsh may claim to be cognate. Gerald also notes earlier in the *Descriptio* that: 'Cornubia vero, et Armorica Britannia, lingua utuntur fere persimili; Kambris tamen, propter originalem convenientiam, in multis adhuc et fere cunctis intelligibili' (i.6, 177; *Opera*, vi; In Cornwall and Brittany they use almost the same language [as in Wales]; because of

their original agreement, it is still intelligible to the Welsh in many ways and almost entirely). Indeed, the Latin term *Walensibus* was, as Busby (2017, 32, n. 51) notes, also used to denote the Cornish.

Gerald's *Descriptio* famously concludes with the quotation of a Welshman in Pencader (Carmarthenshire), who has joined Henry II's army against his own people because of their sins (for which, according to Galfridian historiography, the Welsh were punished by God with the invasion of the Saxons and with the reduction of their jurisdiction to the borders of Wales). The soldier says:

'Nec alia, ut arbitror, gens quam hæc Kambrica, *aliave lingua*, in die districti examines coram Iudice supremo, quicquid de ampliori contingat, pro hoc terrarum angulo respondebit.' (ii.10, 227, my emphasis)

'Whatever else may come to pass, I do not think that on the Day of Direst Judgement any race other than the Welsh, *or any other language*, will give answer to the Supreme Judge of all for this small corner of the earth.'

The soldier accepts his people's downfall at the hands of the Saxons and Normans. He accepts that they live sinfully. He even accepts Anglocentric designations of Wales as a mere *angulus* of the world (though, given the referential ambiguity of the statement, his *angulus* might be intended to designate the British Isles more widely, as former 'Welsh' lands). Yet, the Welshman nonetheless believes in the endurance of the Welsh people and also, crucially, in the endurance of the Welsh language. Indeed, Gerald's soldier nominates Welsh, above English, French, or even the Church's own Latin, as the language in which Wales — if not all of Britain — will answer to God himself.

Drawing on this scheme, then, translating from Latin or French into Welsh is not analogous to translating from the supralocal to the circumscribed, from the global to the local; in historiographical theory, at least, Welsh had purchase on a wide geographical area and temporal period, stretching from ancient Troy to contemporary Wales. It was cognate with Greek and Latin, intelligible across Wales, Brittany, and Cornwall. It was the direct descendant of the earlier *lingua franca* of the North Atlantic archipelago, and, ultimately, is the language in which the British Isles will speak to God.

Gerald's vision of a networked Welsh is certainly resonant with the world imagined in the native tales copied in the Red Book. For example, *Branwen* is curiously insistent on the linguistic exchanges that occur between the Britons and Irish, yet never references the need for translation. In the text's opening sequence, for instance, where the ships of Matholwch approach the shores of Harlech, it is specified that the Irish king's men approach the rock on which Bendigeidfran is seated 'ual yd ymglywynt ymdidan' (1, l. 25; so that they could hear and speak to each other). No mention is made, however, of any act of translation. Similarly, we are told that the British and Irish celebrate the nuptials of Matholwch and Branwen, and *converse*: 'Dilit y gyuedach a wnaethant ac ymdidan' (2, ll. 53–54,

my emphasis; They celebrated the feast and *conversed*). Later too, despite having compensated Matholwch for the mutilation of his horses at the hands of Efysien, it is specifically the *conversation* of the malcontent Matholwch that Bendigeidfran notices to have changed:

A dechreu ymdidan a wnaeth Matholwch a Bendigeituran. Ac nachaf yn ardiawc gan Uendigeituran yr ymdidan, ac yn drist (...) ‘A wr,’ heb y Bendigeiduran, ‘nit wyt gystal ymdidanwr heno ac un nos.’ (4, ll. 119–24)

Matholwch and Bendigeidfran began to converse. It seemed to Bendigeidfran that the conversation was lifeless and sad (...) ‘Sir’, said Bendigeidfran, ‘you are not as good an interlocutor tonight as the other night.’

The language in which these exchanges occur is not specified, nor is any vehicular language stated, though the mutual intelligibility of Irish and Welsh is minimal. One possibility is that the Welsh-language text, with its Welsh-language renderings of the interlocutors’ direct speech, assumes that Welsh (or, at least, its ancestor) is also the language of communication between the Irish and Britons. Another is that, in this imagined ancient past, that linguistic ancestor is imagined as the *lingua franca* of the North Atlantic archipelago. In any case, *Branwen* imagines a mythical past where the language of the ancient Britons is spoken well beyond the bounds of Wales: it encompasses the whole of Britain, and is spoken if not *in* Ireland, then at least *by* the Irish, too.

This is not to say that translation is absent from all of the native tales. As we have already seen, *Culhwch ac Olwen* features the interpreter protagonist Gwrhŷr Gwalstawd Ieithoedd who speaks all languages, human and nonhuman: “‘Yr holl ieithoed yssyd gennyt, a chyfyieith wyt a’r rei o’r adar a’r annieileit”’ (31, ll. 842–43; You have all the languages, and are fluent in those of the birds and beasts). Although not one of the main protagonists in either the erotic or political narratives of the text, it is no understatement to say that both of those narratives fundamentally depend on Gwrhŷr’s linguistic interventions. It is, for example, only Gwrhŷr who can entreat with the boar Twrch Trwyth, and only Gwrhŷr can converse with the *anifeiliaid hynaf* in the search for Mabon fab Modron. His unique linguistic abilities leave this section of the text full of his direct speech, and the utterances of the animals themselves are equally only comprehensible to the company and to the text’s audience by the presence of Gwrhŷr, upon whom the narrative’s success and the text’s very intelligibility both depend.

On the one hand, Gwrhŷr’s magical omnilingualism might perhaps be read as the ultimate ‘flattening out of the territory’. It dismantles all linguistic hierarchies, since for Gwrhŷr all languages appear as translatable into all other languages. Yet, on the other hand, we only actually ever hear Gwrhŷr speak Welsh. Even as it characterises Gwrhŷr as the omnicompetent interpreter, no mention is ever actually made of the *act* or *process* of translation; Gwrhŷr simply speaks to the animals — usually

described with the formulaic ‘a dywawt’ (l. 883, 912; said) — and the animals reply, with the exchange rendered in the Welsh of the text. The conceit of the text in dissimulating the moment of translation serves to present us with a seemingly Welsh-speaking protagonist. Indeed, in the context of the narrative, Gwrhŷr appears as a Briton, whose proper name is morphologically engrained in Welsh: *gwrhŷr gwalstawd ieithoedd* means roughly ‘man who (is) interpreter of languages’. In the imaginary of *Culhwch*, a kind of linguistic hierarchy *does* in fact remain, and it accords Welsh a privileged position: it is less the case that all languages are translatable into each other than that all languages are translatable into Welsh. Pushing further on Gerald’s theorisations, Welsh is imagined in the figure of Gwrhŷr Gwalstawd Ieithoedd to have privileged purchase on all other languages.

However, as a counterpoint to the figure of Gwrhŷr, a somewhat less triumphal Welsh-language view of translation is provided by the short narrative *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*. The earliest attestation of the text is as an addition inserted into *Brut y Brenhinedd*, the Welsh version of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia Regum Britanniae*, in Llanstephan MS 1 (c. 13th century). It was subsequently inserted into all versions of the *Brut*, except for the Dingestow and Peniarth 44 versions. It was also copied as an independent narrative in the White and Red Books, though was probably in oral circulation from the late eleventh century.²¹ The text introduces us to the sons of Beli: Lludd, who inherits the kingdom of Britain and founds Caer Lludd (London), and Llefelys, who becomes king of France. The text then tells of three plagues that descend upon the land of Britain: the first are a people called the *Coraniaid*; the second is an abject scream that occurs every May Day eve and causes pregnant women to miscarry; the third is the disappearance of all supplies from Lludd’s stores each night. Lludd travels to France seeking the advice of his brother who provides explanations for the three plagues and instructions for how to rid the land of them.

Particularly interesting for our purposes here is the first plague, the *Coraniaid*, a people who arrive in Britain with the magical ability to hear even the merest whisper if it is carried on the wind:

Kyntaf onadunt oed, ryw genedyl a doeth a elwit y Coranneit, a chymeint oed eu gwybot ac nat oed ymadrawd dros wyneb yr ynys, yr isset y dywettit, o’r kyuarffei y gwynt ac ef, nys gwpynt, ac wrth hynny ny ellit drwc udunt. (2, ll. 32–35)

The first of these [the three plagues] was a certain people that came, called the Coraniaid, and so great was their knowledge that across the island there was no conversation, no matter how softly it was spoken, that they did not know about, so long as the wind touched it. And for that reason no harm could be done to them.

²¹ On the textual history of *Lludd a Llyfelys*, see Roberts’ edition (1975, esp. xi, xv, xxvii).

Several scholars have speculated as to the folkloric origins of the *Coraniaid*. In 1878, Lewis Morris suggested that they were ‘the people called by Roman writers *Coritani*’, and were probably ‘Germans’ rather than Gauls (100). The derivation from Coritani/Coritavi was supported by John Rhys in 1901 in his *Celtic Folklore* (675), but was disproven by Ifor Williams in his edition of the text ([1910] 1922, xii).²² Meanwhile, Brynley F. Roberts, in his 1975 edition, suggests Irish analogies in the figures of the evil *Fomóraig* or *Tuátha Dé Danann* (xxxii–xxxiii).

Whatever their origin, the *Coraniaid* are so threatening — and, indeed, invincible — not only because they *hear* every word, but because they also *understand* every word, thereby making them impossible to harm. Issues of communication remain even when Lludd asks for help from Llefelys. The brothers resolve to speak through a bronze horn so that their conversation will not touch the wind; however, the horn becomes possessed by a *kythreul* (demon) who distorts their words so that ‘ny dodei ar yr vn onadunt namyn ymadrawd go atcas gwrthwyneb’ (3, ll. 75–76; nothing was uttered to each of them save hateful, hostile speech). This short episode has obvious religious connotations (the demon is chased out when the horn is washed with wine). It also shows that the *Coraniaid*’s powers extend beyond the surface of the island (*wyneb yr ynys*) to its surrounding seas: the brothers must use the horn even though their meeting takes place at sea, possibly somewhere in the Channel (ll. 62–67).

My suggestion is that the *kythreul* and the *Coraniaid* are significant figures insofar as they articulate very reasonable Welsh anxieties over a nexus of ideas about language, multilingualism, and translation. Particularly by the time of *Lludd a Llefelys*’s written circulation in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, its depictions of hegemonic colonisers appropriating native speech resonates loudly with a number of pro-hegemonic insular texts claiming for themselves Welsh/British sources. Gaimar’s *Estoire des Engleis* (c. 1136–37), for example, famously declares itself the product of a number of sources in English, French, and Latin (ll. 6441–44). However, he also describes the trajectory of a book procured for him by his lady, Constance: she obtained it from Walter Espec in Helmsley (North Yorkshire), who obtained it from Robert of Gloucester, who had had it translated ‘solum les livres as Waleis’ (l. 6451; according to the books of the Welsh). This book is, Gaimar says, essential to his *Estoire*: if his lady had not helped him, ‘ja a nul jor ne l’achevast’ (l. 6446; he would never have completed it).

²² Rhys (1901, 675) also suggests a relation to the Welsh *cor* (dwarf/pigmy), which Williams ([1910] 1922) accepts.

Yet, Gaimar's attitude towards his Welsh-derived source is markedly different from his handling of the numerous other sources upon which he draws, such as Archdeacon Walter's '*bon livre dē Oxford*' (l. 6464, my emphasis; *good* book of Oxford) and the English book from Winchester (l. 6469) by which the text was also *amende[e]* (l. 6468; corrected, improved).²³ When referring to the Welsh book, meanwhile, Gaimar writes: 'Geffrai Gaimar cel livre escri[s]t | [e] les transsa[n]dances i mist | k[ē] li Waleis ourent leissé' (ll. 6459–61; Geffrei Gaimar made a copy of this book and added to it the supplementary materials that the Welsh had left out).

Aside from offering a fascinating insight into textual networks in twelfth-century England, this short section of the *Estoire* also (inadvertently) corroborates the anxieties later articulated by texts like *Lludd a Llefelys*. The writings of the Welsh are essential to this first history of the English, a text devoted to the formation of a French-speaking *English* community, identity, and (crucially) hegemony.²⁴ Yet (or, perhaps, therefore), Gaimar distances himself from the Welsh-language material — recall that he reads the work(s) in translation — and seeks primarily to *correct* the Welsh-derived source, openly declaring his project of rewriting and overwriting native traditions into his own *English* history.

Another key example of self-proclaimed Welsh-derived texts is, of course, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (c. 1136–38). In the prologue Geoffrey famously claims to be translating his *Historia* from a 'Britannici sermonis librum uetustissimum' (*Prologus*, 9–10; very old book in the British language), given to him by Walter, archdeacon of Oxford. As I will discuss in the next chapter, Geoffrey's own political affiliations have been widely debated, as have those of Arthurian romance generally. Suffice to say here that the figure of Arthur popularised by the *Historia* is easily one of the most politically appropriable figures in all of medieval literature, indexing both Welsh hopes for future re-conquest of Britain and English desires to consolidate their hegemony.

Thus is Robert Wace able to propagate in his translation of Geoffrey's *Historia* a pervasively pro-English agenda: his *Roman de Brut* is bookended by its own professing to recount the history of the kings 'Ki Engleterre primes tendrent' (l. 4, my emphasis; who first held *England*) (see also l. 14862: Ki Engleterre lunges tindrent). Again all of Britain is subsumed by England, as in Henry's *Historia*, Gaimar's *Estoire*, and the *Description of England* discussed in the Introduction (§1). Just as Wales is

²³ AND, 'amender' v.a. (1 and 3). <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/amender>

²⁴ On Gaimar and English 'national' identity, see Davies (1996, 12), Freeman (1996), Gillingham (2000, esp. 99–100), Dalton (2007), Ashe (2007, 20).

erased from the map, so too is the Britishness of Wace's supposed textual grandparent: Wace describes his source simply as *li livres* (l. 9; the book), which could refer to Geoffrey's British *librum* or, more obviously, to the *Historia* itself (which is, after all, Wace's source).

This is not to say that Wace does not engage with Welsh. In an oft-cited passage near the close of the narrative, Wace relates the arrival of the Saxons by describing their replacing of Welsh place-names and morphemes with Saxon ones:

Les nuns, les lages, le language
Voldrent tenir de lur lignage;
Pur Kaer firent Cestre dire,
E pur Suiz firent nomer Sire,
E Tref firent apeler Tune;
Map est gualeis, engleis est Sune,
En gualeis est Kaer cité
Map fiz, Tref vile, Suiz cunté,
E alquant dient que cuntree
Swiz est en gualeis apelee
E ço que dit Sire en engleis
Ço puet ester Suiz en gualeis. (ll. 14739–50)

They [the Saxons] wanted to keep the names, laws, and language of their heritage. For *Kaer* they said *Chester*, and for *Suiz* they said *Shire*, and *Tref* they called *Town*. *Map* is Welsh; *Son* is English. In Welsh *Kaer* means city; *Map*, son; *Tref*, town; *Suiz*, county; and some say that a region/country is called *Swiz* in Welsh and that what *Shire* means in English may be *Suiz* in Welsh. (Italics designate all non-French nouns.)

Yet, Wace is only interested in these various translations insofar as they betoken and (re)produce shifts in insular political hegemony from the Britons to the Saxons to the francophone English. Indeed, Wace's triangulation of these Welsh-English translations with French (*cité*, *fiz*, *vile*, *cunté*) acts not only as an aid to his francophone audiences, but also as a marker of this third (and final) shift of power. That it is imagined as final is beyond doubt: Wace spends the remaining hundred lines of his text definitively delimiting Welsh political ambitions.²⁵

Coraniaid avant la lettre, Gaimar, Wace, and — in certain readings — Geoffrey might all be read as translating and, indeed, mistranslating Welsh and its historical and narrative traditions into *ymadrawd go atcas gwrthwyneb* (hateful, hostile speech). Again reminiscent of the translations of ANT, these redactions of British history are never simply reproductions of their putative sources; rather, they transform them into works deeply inflected by their own political affiliations, often self-

²⁵ First, a divine voice (*voiz divine*) declares to King Cadwalader that 'Engleis Bretaine aver deveient' (l. 14791; the English were to have Britain) and that Arthur cannot return until Merlin's prophecy is fulfilled (which in turn cannot occur until his remains are removed from Rome to Britain). The voice's proclamations are then ratified by King Alain and his scholars with reference to the authorities of Merlin, Aquila the good soothsayer (*le bon divin*), and the Sibyl. Finally, the *Guales* are left under the rule of leaders nominated and sanctioned by the English hegemony, namely Cadwalader's sons Yvor and Yni (ll. 14818–24), and are described as a wholly degenerated race: 'Tuit sunt mué e tuit changié, | Tuit sunt divers e forsligné | De noblesce, d'onur, de mur | E de la vie as anceisurs' (ll. 14851–54; They [the Welsh] have quite altered and quite changed, are quite different and have deteriorated from the nobility, honour, and life of their ancestors).

consciously so. *Lludd a Llefelys* shows an acute native awareness of, and anxiety over, the vulnerability of British history to cultural, political, and linguistic appropriation by hegemonic power. Indeed, it is perhaps telling that *Lludd a Llefelys* is so consistently preserved as part of the Welsh *Brut*, the Welsh version of the very text that, in the hands of a writer like Wace, is retooled as a Cambrophobic monument to twelfth-century English hegemony. As a counterpoint to Gwrhyr Gwalstawd Ieithoedd, the *Coraniaid* of *Lludd a Llefelys* might be read as marking not the purchase of Welsh on other languages, but the potentially pernicious purchase of other languages on Welsh.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced distinct yet overlapping representations of language, multilingualism, and translation. The conclusions drawn from these new readings are significant insofar as they challenge traditional conceptualisations of particular languages, of their positions in relation to each other, and of the ideologies to which they are considered attached.

In fact, all of the texts analysed in this chapter imagine their respective languages (whether Latin, French, or Welsh) as, in some way, networked. Even as Walter flaunts the success of his vernacular *dicta* to Gerald of Wales, so does he attempt to sidestep that pitfall in his own Latin *scriptum* by positioning it as a kind of vernacularised Latin. As many Latinists have argued, it is the product of a two-way leakage between Latin and vernacular literatures, cultures, and audiences — a leakage that *De nugis* also self-consciously thematises in Walter's metatextual representations of his own compositional practice. Meanwhile, the *Ipomedon* prologue conceptualises its own shift from Latin to the vernacular as a democratisation of narrative: *romanz* is understood not as the idiom of a social elite, but as a gateway to more socially diverse textual networks, a shift dramatised in *Protheselaus* in the figure of Latin, the Frenchman. French emerges from *Protheselaus* and, even more emphatically, from the Ludlow scribe's *Fouke*, as a supralocal language spoken across wide geographical and social spectra as first and acquired language, even as a kind of composite *latin corrupt*. Finally, reading the works of the Red Book scribes alongside the earlier writings of Gerald of Wales, we uncover an image of Welsh as a supralocal language of another kind. Conceived of in terms of its connections to Greek, Latin, Cornish, and Breton, its purchase on other tongues (human and non-human) is aptly illustrated by the *Mabinogi* and the figure of Gwrhyr Gwalstawd Ieithoedd. In short,

key to the wide-ranging networks described in Chapter 2 are not only the agencies of the nonhuman world, but also those networks' linguistic modalities.

Moreover, and again like the images of nonhuman agency encountered in the previous chapter, these texts' networked representations of language, multilingualism, and translation take on particular political colourations when read against the contexts of their production, circulation, and consumption. *Protheselaus*'s francophone map, for instance, ceases to be merely descriptive of twelfth-century linguistic geography: it also performatively connects the supposedly 'peripheral' poet and his text into the francophone networks that he describes. *Fouke*, equally, does not merely represent French as a supralocal language; rather, that supralocalism becomes key to *Fouke*'s rebellion against the reigning establishment. Similarly, the Ely *jongleur*'s comic flippancy and the macaronic dynamics of *Against the King's Taxes* begin to exceed mere linguistic acrobatics and sharpen into more biting critiques. Horn, too, might stand with Johan de Raunpayne and the Ely *jongleur* in a kind of minstrel trio: all three exploit the capacities of French — whether by creating the illusion of foreignness, by playing with homophony and polysemy, or as a courtly idiom for the singing of lays — in order to resist royal power to subversive and, in Horn's case, regicidal effect. Finally, the nurturing of Welsh-language culture and the imagining of its supralocal purchase on other European languages brokers clear political currency in late fourteenth-century Glamorgan. The image of the *Coraniaid*, meanwhile, comes to represent the flipside of such a fantasy, articulating an anxiety over the susceptibility of Welsh and its narrative traditions to (mis)appropriation by hegemonic power, as is aptly demonstrated in the works of Gaimar and Wace.

Thus, reading with networks sensitises us not only to the agencies of the nonhuman world, but also, in a sense, to the agency of language itself. It highlights the ways in which languages co-operate in (or frustrate) the texts' networking, the ways in which texts descriptively represent and performatively deploy languages — often, but not exclusively, the one(s) in which they are composed — as networking devices integrated into their political programmes. I suggested in Chapter 2 that these texts show their localities as networked and able to contest; this chapter has explored the linguistic modalities of how, exactly, that contestation is articulated.

5. Connected Courts: Networks and the Welsh Marches in Arthurian Literature

In the first chapter of this thesis I made a literary-historical case for understanding my three case studies as important hubs in transregional, multilingual textual networks. Over the following three chapters I analysed the texts composed, copied, and circulated in these test-case locales, or that were composed by writers from them. These chapters investigated, in turn, the corpus's representations of networks, the nonhuman, and language. Throughout, my argument has been that understanding these texts and their contexts in networked terms enables us to restore to them a degree of political and cultural agency.

However, beyond texts from immediate Welsh or Marcher milieus, Wales and the Welsh Marches occupy an important position in the wider medieval imaginary. They are, in particular, of great importance to Arthurian literature, both as regions represented in the Arthurian world and as regions influencing its literary-historical development. These points have long been acknowledged by scholarship. Since the 1920s, Roger Sherman Loomis's work has been highly influential in its argument for the importance of Celtic oral traditions in the dissemination of literary motifs before their narrativisation in French-language texts, especially those of Chrétien.¹ Numerous scholars have expanded and revised Loomis's work, pointing to the role played by courts and textual communities in the Welsh Marches in providing cross-cultural interface for the cross-pollination of textual traditions like Arthurian romance. Constance Bullock-Davies, for instance, describes the intermixing of 'Cyfarwyddiad, latimers, and French, Welsh, and English minstrels (...) in the same castles along the Welsh Marches from the time of the Conquest' (1966, 18). Similarly, as we have already seen in this thesis, Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan's work has done much to identify points of contact between Cambrophone and Francophone literatures, often in Arthurian contexts, and often pointing to the Marches as a vector for cross-pollination.² Michelle Warren's 2000 work *History on the Edge* even

¹ On Chrétien, in particular, see Loomis (1949). On the influence of Wales and 'Celtic' culture on Arthurian literature more generally, see Loomis (1956; [1963] 2000; 1997).

² For example, in 'Crossing the Borders' (2008, 161), Lloyd-Morgan points to the importance of Marcher courts in this cross-pollination, though on Welsh-French translation more widely see also Lloyd-Morgan (1985; 1989; 1991; 2009). On the role of Latin in this intermixing, see Echard (1998, 194–204).

more forcefully characterises Arthurian historiography as ‘border writing’ composed ‘in relation to border pressures’ by writers consistently associated with border regions (2000, xii).³

In short, much has been done to uncover the Marches as an important vector for cross-cultural exchange in the development of Arthurian historiography and romance. We should hardly be surprised, then, that the Welsh Marches also occupy such an important position within the Arthurian imaginary itself. In this final chapter, therefore, I aim to widen the scope of my analysis in order to investigate the ways in which the ‘territory’ of medieval Britain and Europe might be seen as ‘opened up and flattened out’ in the world of Arthurian literature. What picture of the Welsh Marches emerges from the world of Arthurian literature? What might be the political implications of that picture?

Of course, a chapter such as this cannot hope to be exhaustive in its coverage of an entire, pan-European genre. For this reason, I will limit my analysis to strictly Arthurian romance and historiography, and will omit corpora such as Tristan material: proper explication of this substantial para-Arthurian tradition would require more space than I can here devote to it. Given, however, that my aim is to investigate the place of the Marches in Arthurian representations of pan-European political and cultural geography, my investigation will not be confined to particular political or linguistic boundaries. Rather, I analyse texts from the Celtic, Romance, and Germanic worlds, in English, Welsh, insular and continental French, Occitan, Dutch, German, and Latin. Material in other languages will not be included due to my own linguistic competencies.

Taking this large, multilingual corpus, my analysis proceeds first by tracing the contours of Arthurian political and cultural geography, paying particular attention to the place of the Marches in the Arthurian universe. The following two sections address certain qualities of Arthur’s Marcher courts: namely, their mobility (§2) and their connectedness (§3). The final section looks at the ways in which Arthur’s courts further connect by referring to each other in and across Arthurian texts.

5.1. *Mapping Courts*

The first question to ask, then, is: where are Arthur’s courts?

³ These writers include, for the Welsh borders, Geoffrey of Monmouth (and his afterlives in Wace, Gaimar’s lost history, the *Brut y Brenhinedd*, *Brut y Tywysogion*, and *Brenhinoedd y Saesson*), Lazamon, and Robert of Gloucester.

Appendix 7 sets out the various locations at which Arthur holds court in a selection of texts that span several languages and centuries. The prominence of the Welsh Marches is difficult to overlook.⁴

Of course, Geoffrey of Monmouth famously situated Arthur's court at *Urbs Legionis* (Caerleon) and, while Arthur's courts vary in Chrétien, they are primarily at *Carlion* or *Cardoeil* (Cardiff/Carlisle, see §4).⁵ *Yvain* also features *Cestre* (Chester). Thus, *Yvain and Gawain* features not only *Kerdyf*, but also *Cester*, though Hartmann's *Iwein* has *Karidôl* in both instances. Chrétien's *Erec* begins at *Caradigant* (Cardigan), which therefore also appears in *Fergus*, *Ferguut*, and Hartmann's *Erec*. Chrétien's *Erec* also mentions *Cardueil*, *Tintaguel* (Tintagel), *Rohais* (?), and *Nantes* (Nantes), though without mention of *Carlion*.

Carlion and *Cardoeil* also appear in *La Vengeance Raguidel*, the *Continuation-Gauvain*, and the (non-cyclic) *Lancelot*, which also introduces several other courts to the Arthurian world, including: *Londres* (London), *Logres* (London?), *Karahais* (Carhaix), *Campercorantin* (Quimper), and, of course, *Camahalot* (Camelot), which is picked up by subsequent tradition, and eventually makes its way into Malory. *Camaalot* is also attested in the post-1220 *Troisième Continuation de Perceval*, the so-called Manessier-Continuation.

Charlion features in *Le Bel Inconnu*, the plot of which revolves around the securing of *Gales* for Blonde Esmeree. *Karliun* appears in Marie de France's *Milun* and *Yonec*, and *Kardoeil* in *Lanval*; this last reference is retained in *Sir Launfal* as *Kardevyle*. This text also introduces *Karlyoun*, whereas *Sir Landevale* exchanges this Welsh setting for *Carlile* solely (see §4). Indeed, Carlisle (*Carlile*/*Carleile*/*Carlele*/*Carlyll*) features more reliably in later, English-language texts, such as *The Weddyng of Syr Gawen* and *The Awntyrs off Arthure*.

The Occitan *Jaufre* has *Carduel*, while Dutch-language texts feature both *Karlioën* and *Kardole*/*Kardeloet* (mentioned in *Walewein*, *De Riddere metter mouwen*, and *Ferguut*). As mentioned above, *Ferguut* retains the reference to *Caradigaen* (Cardigan) from *Erec* via *Fergus*. German-

⁴ The courts attested here are not limited to the editions' base manuscripts; however, as I have not been able to consult the hundreds of manuscripts of these various texts personally, I have relied on the editions to record variance faithfully. For details of editions used, see References.

⁵ In order to avoid giving the impression that there are anything like stable, standardised forms of these place names, I will, throughout this chapter, refer to each court with the title used in the text in question as far as is practicable: these are italicised throughout, and given without the diacritical marks added during the editing process. Here I offer in brackets suggestions, where possible, for equivalent real-world locations for these residences. When referring to real-world locations *not* in relation to any texts, I use conventional modern English spelling without italicisation.

language texts feature *Karidôl* (*Cardoeil* [Wolfram's *Parzival*]) and *Kardigân* (Cardigan [Hartmann's *Erec*]).

Y Tair Rhamant (*Owein*, *Peredur*, *Geraint*) stick firmly with *Kaer Llion ar Wysc* (Caerleon), but there is more variation in the triads. *Kaer Llion* is retained by Triads 51, 94, and the Peniarth 50 version of Triad 85, which situates Arthur's other chief residences at *Celli Wic* (Celliwig, Arthur's Cornish capital, also mentioned in *Culhwch ac Olwen*) and *Penryn Rioned* (Penrhyn Rhionydd, Arthur's capital in the *Hen Ogledd*).⁶ An earlier version of this triad has *Aberffra(6)* (Arthur's North Welsh capital) in place of *Kaer Llion*. Triad 1 has *Kelli Wic*, *Penn Ryonyd*, and *Mynyw* (St David's).

Other Arthurian courts include *Rouëlent* (probably Rhuddlan, mentioned in *La Vengeance Raguidel*), *Glomorgan* (Glamorgan, mentioned in the *Continuation-Gauvain*), and *Dinasdaron* (another Marcher court, see §4).

Arthur is not, of course, the only lord to own castles and hold court: we are also often informed of the lands of his many knights, which also merit inclusion here. *Parzival*, for example, is depicted as the rightful heir to Herzeloide's lands of *Norgals* and *Waleis*, and their respective capitals of *Kingrivals* and *Kanvoleiz*.⁷ The latter's importance is underlined in *Titirel* where it is hinted to be the successor to *Muntsalvâtsche*, the Grail Castle, and 'dâ von Kanvoleiz verre ist bekennet: | si wart in manger zungen ie der triwen houbetstat genennet' (45.3–4; for this reason *Kanvoleiz* is known far and wide, and in many tongues is called the true castle).

Similarly, the exploits of Arthur's knights frequently result in the acquisition of lands, at times very distant from Arthur's own realm. In the Dutch *Roman van Moriaen*, for example, Aglovale travels back with his eponymous son to the land of *Moriane* to regain the lands of his son and Moorish lover. The conclusion of *Walewein* also suggests that *Walewein* departs to rule the lands of his beloved, *Ysabele*, who is from *Endi* (India). *Yvain*, too, in his French, Welsh, German, and English incarnations, becomes lord of the realm of *Laudine*. This land must be near Arthur's court at *Cardoeil* from which *Yvain* sets off into *Brocheliande* forest, though the events at the fountain perhaps suggest a movement into a supernatural realm, like the one over which *Lanval/Launfal/Landevale* ends up lord. Similarly, in

⁶ Celliwig has been identified variously as Callington, Killibury, Callywith, Domellick, Gweek Wood, and Kelly Rounds. Bromwich (*TYP*, 3) suggests that the *Celliwig* of *Culhwch* is *Penn Pengwaed* (Penwith Point). Celliwig may, alternatively, indicate some kind of link to the Romano-British *Cornovii*, whose lands covered the modern Welsh border regions of Shropshire and Powys (Koch 2006, 136). Bromwich (*TYP*, 4) suggests Galloway as the location for Penrhyn Rhionydd.

⁷ In the complex and hazy geography of this text, Arthur is the king of the realm of *Löver*, a land distinct from the lands of *Engellant* (England) and *Bertâne* (Britain) (xv, 761, l. 27). *Bertâne*, here, presumably signifies the lands of *Waleis* (either South Wales or Wales *tout court*) and *Norgalz* (either North Wales or the *Hen Ogledd*).

the *Continuation-Gauvain*, Arthur's reconciliation with the Guiromelant results in his acquisition of the knight's holdings of *Dinasdaron* (l. 1047) in Wales and *Notigehan sor Trente* (l. 1049; Nottingham).

A particularly interesting example of Arthurian knightly holdings is provided by Erec. Chrétien's Erec is the owner of two castles, *Rotelan* and *Montrevel*, that he grants to Enide's father (ll. 1330–35).⁸ Hartmann's Êreck grants him *Montrevel* and *Roadân* (l. 1827). These castles are situated in Erec's geographically hazy homeland of *Outre Gales/Destregâls*. This realm could lie in South Wales, bearing in mind that Arthur is initially based in Cardigan in West Wales in this text. It could, alternatively, be North Wales: particularly given the very similar assignation of Hue de *Rotelande*, *Rotelan* may designate Rhuddlan. Neither of these solves the problem, however, that *Outre Gales* suggests somewhere *outré* (outside of) Wales. Another possibility is Brittany: after all, Erec is crowned in *Nantes*.⁹ A final option is Cornwall. In 1939, Mary Williams suggested that *Montrevel* is Rialton in Cornwall (409), and that *Nantes/Carnant* designates Ros-Carnant near Tintagel in Cornwall (411). In support of the Cornish option, the Welsh *Geraint*, has Arthur's Easter court at *Kaer Llion ar Wysc* (Caerleon), from which Geraint travels to Enid's home in *Cayrddyf* (Cardiff), before being called back to his homeland in *Kernyw* (Cornwall). It may also be significant that the pre-Chrétien poem *Gereint filius Erbin* (c. 900–1100), preserved in the Black Book of Carmarthen (c. 1250), speaks of Gereint's 'guir deur o odir diwneint' (*LIDC*, 72, ll. 10–11; brave men from the lowlands of Devon). Although this indeterminacy is itself worthy of comment (see below), what is clear is that Erec/Geraint is another landholder in a decidedly Celtic region, be that Wales, Brittany, or Cornwall.

Appendix 8 (Fig. 6) visually maps the courts identified in Appendix 7, and offers a close-up of those in Welsh and Marcher territories (Fig. 7). One point that clearly arises is that Arthur's courts represent a decidedly non-Anglocentric, non-Francocentric version of political geography. Although it is by no means exhaustive, of the twenty courts appearing in Appendix 7, fifteen lie in Celtic lands, eight within the regions of the Welsh Marches, and another in *Pura Wallia* (Aberffraw) (for a tabulated breakdown of these see Appendix 9). Furthermore, the Welsh Marcher courts, especially *Cardueil* and *Carlion*, are by far the most frequent, and are also transmitted in the texts with the most significant manuscript dissemination. Appendix 7 highlights in bold the texts that reference *Carlion*, which clearly occupies, probably due to the influence of Geoffrey's *Historia*, an important position in the tradition.

⁸ Manuscript variants for these names include: *Roadan* (B), *Rodoan* (H), *Tonadan* (P, for l. 1335), and *Rodouan* (P, for l. 1877), and *Mont Revelein* (B).

⁹ Nantes appears variously as *Nantes* (l. 6545, 6554, 6576, 6646, 6857), *Carrant* (l. 2311), and *Carnant* (MS H) in Chrétien, but more uniformly *Carnant* in Hartmann.

London does appear in the texts, but fairly infrequently, and its appearance in the non-cyclic *Lancelot* is only as one court in relation to at least six others. Other traditional English power-centres like Winchester, Oxford, and Canterbury are largely absent from the corpus, as is Paris.

In certain texts, there is a political element to this westward *translatio* of power: for example, in Occitan- and Welsh-language texts, the decentring of Capetian and Angevin power-centres is undoubtedly in line with political motivations. Taking the corpus as a whole, however, the political geography of the Arthurian world certainly seems to bear out this thesis's account of the Welsh Marches as an eminently well-connected, networked space. The Welsh Marches are imagined as home to a high number of Arthur's court residences, and occupy an important position in the Arthurian world's revised vision of medieval political geography.

Occasionally contrasts are more self-consciously set up between the political geographies of the real and Arthurian worlds. Take, for example, the Dutch *Roman van Walewein*, a thirteenth-century Gawain-romance possibly composed in Western Flanders.¹⁰ After killing a dragon in a mountain, Walewein, still mounted on his horse Gringolet, jumps into a river so that, if he dies, the current will take his body to where someone might recognise him. At the moment of his leap, the narrator informs us: 'Haddi hi gheweset van Parijs | Here, hi adt wel gherne ghegheven | Ene hi te Carlioen ware bleven!' (58, ll. 712–14; Had he been lord of Paris, he would have gladly given it up to have stayed in Carlioen). The text posits Paris as a reference-point for magnitude, but one which Walewein would gladly abandon in order to be at Arthur's court: for Walewein, Arthurian *Carlioen* easily trumps the Capetian capital.

Faletra (2014) writes about Arthurian literature as 'an essentially colonialist paradigm', one that celebrates 'the triumph of the chivalric center over the barbarous (and usually Welsh) periphery' (18). But what happens to this paradigm when that 'centre' *is* the Welsh 'periphery'? It is clear from even this cursory survey that Arthurian literature imagines non-Anglo- and non-Francocentric geographies that are highly decentralised: locations like Bartlett's Parisian and Roman 'core' or Hechter and Brustein's Roman-Germanic axis are either stripped of their hegemonic status or left altogether absent. Thus, whether they seek to use Arthur to articulate Angevin or Capetian expansionist fantasies, many of these texts are, in doing so, forced also to imagine a past world governed from the

¹⁰ See References (*Ferguut*): Johnson and Classens (2000, 4), drawing on E. van den Berg (1987). Van den Berg locates a high density of Arthurian romance production and consumption in the region of Western Flanders, especially near Ghent.

present world's 'fringes' in ways that can but give agency to the very 'barbarous periphery' over which they seek to 'triumph'.

Yet, a perhaps even more probing question is raised by this attempt to map Arthurian courts, whose locations are often subject to a high level of instability and indeterminacy across different texts, and even between translations and their sources. Several courts resist simple mapping onto any specific real-world location (e.g. *Rohais*), while others hover between multiple real-world sites (e.g. *Carduel*, see §4). Even whole realms hesitate between alternative real-world domains (e.g. *Outre Gales*). In short, Arthurian courts seem to be everywhere and nowhere, and a positivist type of analysis like the one applied above can only get us so far. Nor can this indeterminacy be explained away as owing to the vagueness of authors' and scribes' knowledge of the geography in question. Rather, what we are dealing with here is a landscape (and a soundscape) that is both imaginative and imaginary. The Arthurian world has purchase on real world geography, but is not a mere replication of it.

This opening section has taken Arthurian literature at its word, and has attempted to map its geographic referents in real-world terms. The exercise is an illuminating, if fraught, one that introduces a number of ideas to be developed in what follows. For example, it has shown that the Arthurian 'core' is itself always multiple, composed of a mobile court moving between plural residences — a point explored further in §2. Similarly, those courts themselves hover between phonemes as much as between real-world locations — a point to which I return in §4.

For now, suffice to say that mapping Arthurian courts produces three key questions about traditional core-peripheral views of medieval political and cultural geographies. It asks, firstly: how can we uphold Paris, Rome, and London as the 'cores' of European political and cultural power when they occupy such a negligible position in the imaginary of this pan-European literary corpus? Concomitantly, it asks: how can we uphold the 'peripheral' status of the Welsh Marches, when they are imagined by authors and audiences across Europe as central to the Arthurian universe? Finally, and perhaps more searchingly, it asks: how can we speak of 'cores' of medieval Britain or Europe at all when, in the Arthurian universe, any 'core' is indeterminate, ambiguous, unknowable?

5.2. *Moving Courts*

Arthur's court is quite literally a movable feast. The royal retinue frequently travels across the network of court-residences within even fairly short texts. In Chrétien's *Yvain*, for example, Arthur's court is

established at *Cardueil*, yet later moves to Chester. The *Conte du Graal* sees Arthur hold court at both *Carlion* and *Cardueil*, and though *Erec* depicts court primarily at *Caradigant*, it also moves at different points to four others. This theme persists in post-Chrétien texts. For example, *Parzival* and *Die Riddere metter mouwen* depict court at two locations, while the *Manessier-Continuation* and *Fergus/Ferguut* place him at three each. The *Gauvain-Continuation* shows court at four locations, *La Vengeance Raguidel* mentions six, and the non-cyclic *Lancelot* sees Arthur sojourn at at least eight different courts. Indeed, there is a scene in the non-cyclic text dramatising the court's insistent itinerancy, in which Keu and other courtiers complain to Arthur about the excessive length of their stay in *Cardueil* and push Arthur to move on to *Camahalot* (260).

Of course, the Anglo-Norman and Angevin royal courts were themselves itinerant until the thirteenth century, and, in this sense, the moving Arthurian court in earlier texts seems to mirror political realities. In fact, mobility was itself a vehicle for hegemony in eleventh- and twelfth-century Britain, since the royal court was able to exercise and consolidate power over a wider area, often in resistant regions. By the 1180s the chaotic mobility of the court was itself being satirised by Latin-composing courtiers. We need look no further than Walter Map's description of the Henrician court in his famous comparison of the court to Hell: 'temporalis quidem est, mutabilis et uaria, localis et erratica, nunquam in eodem statu permanens (i.1, 2; It is temporal, changeable and various, local and wandering, never remaining in one state); 'sola sit mobilitate stabilis' (i.1, 2; it is stable only in its mobility).

There are also satires of the court's mobility to be found in Arthurian literature itself, not least in the romance *Jaufre*, the only surviving Arthurian romance in Occitan. As a text, *Jaufre* is associated with the Aragonese court: the narrator praises a young-crowned King of Aragon, though does not specify which one. It is in part this ambiguity that means the text is variously dated from c. 1170–80 to c. 1220–30.¹¹ I follow Simon Gaunt and Ruth Harvey (2006) in their summation of *Jaufre* as 'a

¹¹ The dating depends partially on references to a certain *Jaufre* in poems by Giraut de Borneil (fl. 1162–99) and Peire Vidal (fl. 1183–1204), and partially on which King of Aragon we understand the *Jaufre* author to be referring to: Alfonso II (reigned 1162–96, crowned at 10 years old) or Jaime I (reigned 1213–76, crowned at five years old). This dating matters for whether or not *Jaufre* is seen to pre- or post-date Chrétien. Earlier in the twentieth century, critics like Rita Lejeune (1948; 1953) and Paul Rémy (1950) both dated *Jaufre* to c. 1180: they argued in favour of the primacy of Occitan literature, suggesting that the text pre-dates Chrétien's *Conte du Graal* of 1181. More recent critics (Baumgartner 1978; Schmolke-Hasselman [1980] 1998; Zink 1989; Huchet 1991; Jewers 2000; Gaunt and Harvey 2006) prefer a dating of c. 1230, discounting the references in Giraut and Peire as alluding to an alternative person or figure. Drawing on Espadaler (1997; 1999–2000), Lee (2010) makes a convincing case that the reference is to Jaime I, comparing *Jaufre* to similar references in other troubadour works. Following these critics, my own opinion is that *Jaufre*'s ironic style must rely on a pre-existent set of textual norms in order to parody them, and so favour a later, post-Chrétien dating.

humorous, but highly critical, rereading of the romance tradition, particularly of Chrétien de Troyes's romances' (540–41). More specifically, however, a particular source of its satire is to be found in the court's instability, both in terms of its porosity and mobility.

The text begins with Arthur's splendid court at *Carduel*, before following the trajectory of Jaufre, who, like any good Arthurian knight, completes several exploits and takes numerous prisoners whom he sends back to Arthur's court as a measure of his success. However, with every batch of prisoners that Jaufre sends back, the text is curiously specific as to the court's diminishing size (Weaver 1971, 41). When Jaufre sends the barons back to *Carduel*, they arrive to find that Arthur 'Ab sol .xx. e .i. cavalier, | Qe-ls autres s'en eron anatz' (ll. 2090–92; with only twenty-one knights, for the others had gone away). When the maiden and her company arrive, they find Arthur with only his twelve closest knights, "Qe tuit li autres sunt anatz" (l. 2912; for all the others have gone away). Finally, when the besieged fairy of Gibel arrives seeking help from Arthur's court, Arthur has no knights left to offer, admitting that "Piucela, si Galvanz sa foz, | El s'en anera ben am voz" (l. 6321–22; 'Maiden, if Galvanz were here, he would gladly go with you'). Of course, one of the purposes of Arthur's court is to provide a base from which knights leave for adventure and to which others can come seeking help. *Jaufre*, however, comically turns this convention on its head.¹² Indeed, the pointed repetition of the verb (*s'en*) *anar* in pluperfect, perfect, and conditional-functioning future forms links each of these instances across the intervening four thousand lines, picking out in the text's language the diminishing Arthurian centre. Repeated negative pronouns and particles further hammer home the uselessness of Arthur's empty court. We are twice told that, on hearing the besieged lady's complaint: 'Et anc negunz non sonet motz' (l. 6329; And then nobody said a word) and 'E negunz non a mut sonnat' (l. 6335; And nobody said a word).

Moreover, in *Jaufre*, Arthur's court is not only parodied in its sovereign's failure properly to regulate its porosity, but also in his lack of control over its mobility, with the text bookended by his abductions by marvellous beasts. At the opening court scene, Arthur declares that he will not eat before an adventure comes to court. When none appears, he decides that he will go in search of one himself, accompanied by his disgruntled, hungry knights (ll. 168–70). In the forest of *Breselianda*, Arthur insists on being allowed to save a maiden from a wild beast on his own. He tackles the beast hand-to-hand, seizing it by the horns (l. 260). The beast then runs off with Arthur attached to it, much to the

¹² On this, see also Gaunt and Harvey (2006, 539), Weaver (1971, 40–41). For other readings of *Jaufre* as romance parody, see also Kay (1979) and Fleischman (1981).

dismay of the knights, though Arthur orders them not to attack the beast for fear of killing their king by accident (ll. 312–13). The beast then dangles Arthur on its horns over a steep cliff. In response, the knights frantically disrobe themselves and make a pile out of their clothing in order to break their king's fall (ll. 400–10). The knights can only pray for their king's deliverance (ll. 416–18) before both beast and king fall safely onto the clothes, and the beast transforms into the court magician who had contrived the whole adventure in order that everyone might finally eat. An interesting detail is that, when the knights re-clothe themselves, we are told that '(...) negus anc no-i a triat' (l. 476; nobody sorted them). Thus, the knights return to *Carduel* clothed in each other's garments in a striking image of this text's parodic, topsy-turvy take on the Arthurian world.

The king's second abduction occurs at the end of the text during Jaufre's wedding celebrations at *Carduel*. This time Arthur is abducted by a giant bird that transports him to the middle of a wood full of savage animals (ll. 9990–94), before flying him back to *Carduel* and transforming into another beautiful knight. Comically, however, the members of the court all tear at their clothes in sorrow and, in their rags, frantically follow Arthur into the clearly very dangerous wood (ll. 10001–7). Their desperation to follow the king is such that every single court member runs (*corrent*) without delay (*par nun atent*) into a wood 'On homs ni femnas ni enfantz | Nun auson de paor istar' (ll. 9990–91; where no man nor woman nor child dared enter out of fear). More comically still, they all then run back to *Carduel* in their dishevelled state when they see the bird flying back. This ridiculous scene ends with Arthur attempting to provide some kind of closure to the ordeal, again figured through clothing, by commissioning the fabrication of new clothes for all the court to replace their tattered garments.

Nothing and no-one emerges from *Jaufre* unscathed: as Gaunt and Harvey (2006, 540) note, Jaufre is ironised both as knight (when he refuses to sleep) and courtly lover (when he cannot stay awake); Brunissen too is made to look ridiculous in her overblown reaction to Jaufre's 'death', an episode overlaid with dramatic irony, as she attempts to drown herself in the fountain amid a perfectly formed *planh* (lament song). Even the tightly structured Arthurian romance itself is parodied by the sprawling, asymmetrical structure of *Jaufre* (Fleishmann 1981), and by its frequent, usually gratuitous asides (Kay 1979). Still, few come off worse than Arthur: he takes irresponsible decisions, is twice unwittingly abducted, subjects his court to significant distress, and fails to mete out suitable punishment. Moreover, he shows himself incapable of managing the mobility of his court: he fails to

maintain a properly staffed court at Carduel and his second abduction sees his court trailed through a mortally dangerous wood and back.

It is perhaps no coincidence that *De nugis* and *Jaufre* — one the work of a March dweller, the other of a Mediterranean — both formulate biting critical accounts of the mobility of royal power. In other texts too, however, even where mobility is not a target for satire, it continues to undercut any traditional core-peripheral understanding of political and cultural geography. It asks: how can we speak of any stable ‘core’ of power or culture when that core is not only unmappable, but mobile? And, in the case of *Jaufre* and *De nugis*, when that core is not merely mobile but *movable*, when the monarch himself fails to manage its motion?

5.3. Connecting Courts

As we established in Chapter Three, a further benefit of thinking with networks is the significance that they attribute to nonhuman agency. This is particularly relevant to this third section, which underlines the connected quality of Arthurian courts. Arthur’s courts, many of them — as we have seen — located in the Welsh Marches, are frequently represented in Arthurian literature as eminently well connected to other insular and continental centres, a connectedness facilitated, in many instances, by the natural world — by seas, rivers, and navigable land.

As is visible in Appendix 8, almost all of Arthur’s residences are maritime centres: they are either seaports or strategic settlements on key rivers, including the Usk, the Dee, the Clwyd, the Eden, the Thames, the Odet, and the Loire. It is hardly surprising, then, to find that a frequent descriptor of these residences in Arthurian literature is that they are ‘well situated’. The castles of Chrétien’s Erec in *Montrevel* and *Rotelan*, for example, are described not only as ‘Mout buens, mout riches et mout beax’ (l. 1330; very good, very splendid, and very beautiful), but also as ‘Les meilleurs et les *mieuz assis*, | Et ces qui moins dotassent guerre, | Qui fussent en tote sa terre’ (l. 1874, my emphasis; the best and *best situated* and the ones in all his realm that least feared war). The value of these castles lies, then, not only in their sumptuousness, but in their strategic locations.

Elsewhere, several of Arthur’s courts are described in similar terms. The non-cyclic *Prose Lancelot*, for example, describes *Karahais* as ‘bien seant de maintes choses’ (134, ll. 21; well furnished with many things). Later *Carduel* is described as ‘mout estoit aesiez chastiaus de totes choses’ (296, ll.

29–30; a castle very well furnished with all things), and later again is named as ‘la vile ou il [Artu] plus volentiers sejournoit, car trop estoit bien seanz et aaisiez’ (359, ll. 15–17; the town where he (Arthur) most gladly sojourned, for it was excessively well situated and comfortable). Later, it is *Camahalot* which is described as ‘la plus aesiee vile de son regne’ (579, l. 10; the most comfortable/convenient town in his realm). In addition to its metaphorical sense of *suitable* or *appropriate*, the descriptor *bien seant* (< *seoir*, from Latin *sedere*) carries spatial connotations.¹³ *Bien assis* (also from *sedere*) equally straddles the senses of *convenient*, *suitable*, *supplied*, and *situated*.¹⁴ *Aesiee*, meanwhile, carries a sense of *comfortable* and *convenient*.¹⁵ Indeed, the very fact that these residences are considered so comfortable and well supplied in itself implies their strategic placement in terms not only of their agreeable settings, but also of their position in networks circulating luxury goods via road, river, and sea.

Perhaps the status of best-connected court should, however, be reserved for Caerleon, which, probably due to the influence of the *Historia*, has a considerable textual tradition extolling its excellent location. Caerleon, *Isca*, was an important Roman fort settlement in Britain, which is first mentioned by Gildas in the *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae* (c. 540) as *Legionum Urbis* (§10), the home of the martyrs Aaron and Julius. This reference is picked up by Bede in his *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (c. 731) (§7). Ascribed to the Welsh cleric Nennius, the *Historia Brittonum* (c. 829–30) also mentions an *Urbs Legionis* (§56) as the site of the ninth Saxon-British battle: this could refer to York (*Eburacum*), Chester (*Deva*), or Caerleon (*Isca*).¹⁶ Meanwhile, the *Urbis Legion* and *Caer Legion* mentioned in the *A*, *B*, and *C* texts of the *Annales Cambriae* are also ambiguous, referring variously to Chester and Caerleon.¹⁷

In any case, it is the *Legionum Urbis* of Gildas and Bede that is picked up by Geoffrey of Monmouth, who makes *Urbs Legionis* or *Kaerusk* the site of Arthur’s capital. At Arthur’s Whitsun

¹³ DMF, ‘seoir’ (verbe) I.B.1. <http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/seoir>; ‘bienséant’ (adj.) A and B. <http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/bienséant>; GD, ‘seoir’ <http://micmap.org/dicfro/search/dictionnaire-godefroy/seoir>; AND, ‘seer’ (v.n.) 17; (p.pr. as a.) 5 and 6. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/seer%5B1%5D>.

¹⁴ DMF, ‘asseoir’ (verbe) II.A and B. <http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/asseoir>; GD, ‘asseoir’ <http://micmap.org/dicfro/search/dictionnaire-godefroy/asseoir>; AND, ‘assis’ (p.p. as a.) 2 and 3. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/assis>.

¹⁵ DMF, ‘aisé’ (adj.) A and B <http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/aisé>; GD, ‘aisier’ <http://micmap.org/dicfro/search/dictionnaire-godefroy/aisier>; AND, ‘eisé’ (a.) 1, 2, and 4. <http://www.anglo-norman.net/D/eisé>.

¹⁶ Field (1999) suggests that, despite later tradition picking up Caerleon, York is the most probable option. Any identification remains disputable.

¹⁷ For *Caer Legion*, see: a170.1; cw.130. For *Urbis Legionum*, see: a157.1; b1176.7; cw127.5; cw127.5; c297.1; c422.1.

feast, the court at Caerleon is described as a veritable *locus amoenus*. The description is worth quoting in full:

In Glamorgantia etenim *super Oscam fluuium* non longe a Sabrino mari amoeni situ locata, prae ceteris ciuitatibus diuitiarum copiis abundans tantae sollemnitati apta erat. Ex una namque parte praedictum nobile flumen iuxta eam fluebat, *per quod transmarini reges et principes qui uenturi erant nauigio aduehi poterant*. Ex alia uero parte pratis atque nemoribus uallata, regalibus praepollebat palaciis ita ut aureis tectorum fastigiis *Romam imitaretur*. Duabus autem eminebat ecclesiis, quarum una, in honore Iulii martiris erecta, uirgineo dictarum choro perpulchre ornabatur, alia quidem, in beati Aaron eiusdem socii nomine fundata, canonicorum conuentu subnixa, terciam metropolitanam sedem Britanniae habebat. *Praeterea gymnasium ducentorum philosophorum habebat*, qui astronomia atque ceteris artibus eruditi cursus stellarum diligenter obseruabant et prodigia eo tempore uentura regi Arturo ueris argumentis praedicebant. Tot igitur deliciarum copiis praeclara, festiuitati edictae disponitur. (ix.156, ll. 312–26; my emphasis)

Pleasantly situated on the River Usk in Glamorgan, not far from the River Severn, overflowing with an abundance of riches, [Caerleon] was suitable before all other cities for such ceremonies. From one side flowed a noble river, *by which kings and princes could be brought there by boat*. On the other, it was surrounded by meadows and woodlands; it was distinguished by royal palaces with gables covered with gold in such a way that they *resembled Rome*. There also stood two churches, of which one, built in honour of the martyr Julius, was supplied, it was said, with beautiful virgin chorus (i.e. convent of nuns), the other, dedicated to his companion Aaron, with an assembly of canons; [Caerleon] was the third metropolitan see of Britain. *It also possessed a college of two hundred scholars*, learned in astronomy and other arts, who carefully observed the course of the stars and, with accurate proofs, predicted to King Arthur the wonders that were to come. Therefore, since it was famed for such an abundance of delights, [Caerleon] was chosen for the declared celebration.

In this passage, Geoffrey rightly describes Caerleon as an important ecclesiastical centre, the third metropolitan see of Britain, with two churches dedicated to Julius and Aaron. One of Geoffrey's twelfth-century innovations, however, is Caerleon's vibrant scholarly community, its *gymnasium ducentorum philosophorum*. This elaboration is significant, since it situates Geoffrey's Caerleon in another kind of transregional network, namely, a scholarly, university-based one. It is equally resonant that Caerleon's splendour is compared to that of Rome (*Romam imitaretur*). Like Walewein shunning *Parijs* for *Carlion*, Geoffrey's *Urbs Legionum* is presented as Rome's equal. That supposed 'core' of Europe is here rivalled by a court located, in the context of Geoffrey's twelfth century, in the supposedly 'peripheral' Welsh Marches.

Above all, Caerleon is *amoeni situ locata* in terms of its relation to the natural world. Like the courts of the non-cyclic *Lancelot*, Caerleon is, we might say, *bien seant*. It is endowed with *pratis* and *nemoribus* to facilitate the pursuit of courtly activities, and its position *super Oscam fluuium* means that the royalty and aristocracy of Europe can easily reach it (l. 315–16).

And reach it they do, travelling from far and wide to come to the court at Caerleon. The guests include: the kings of Albania (Scotland), Moray, North Wales, South Wales, and Cornwall; the British archbishops (of London, York, and Caerleon) and earls (of Gloucester, Worcester, Warwick, Leicester,

Chester, Canterbury, Salisbury, Bath, Dorchester, and Oxford); the kings of Ireland, Iceland, Gotland, the Orkneys, Norway, Denmark; and, *ex transmarinis*, the lords of Flanders, Boulogne, Normandy, Le Mans, Anjou, Poitou, France, Chartres, and Brittany (xi.156, ll. 328–51).

Mapping this pre-Saxon world onto Geoffrey's contemporary twelfth century, the westward *translatio* of Arthurian power is, again, notable. In terms of insular power, representatives of London and Canterbury are mentioned, but are largely overwhelmed by the list of western and Marcher lords (see Appendix 10, Fig. 8). Indeed, even Oxford is given a Welsh flavouring by Geoffrey, initially recorded as *Ridochiensis* from the Welsh *Rhydychen*, in what Stephen Knight (1983, 63–66) describes as a 'Celtic in-joke'. What this illustrious guest-list presupposes, moreover, is a complex network of water-based travel in which Caerleon is eminently *bien asis*. Via the Channel and the North, Irish, Celtic, and Baltic Seas, the leaders of most of north-western Europe are able to reach the Severn Estuary and the *nobile flumen*, the River Usk, on their way to Arthur's transnational, multilingual court.

Because of the *Historia*'s influence, the court at Caerleon has a significant post-Galfridian afterlife, as can be seen from the texts in bold in Appendix 7, which all at some point place Arthur's court there. Significantly, the connected nature of Caerleon is picked up by later literature. It is present, for example, in Wace:

De riches palaiz semblot Rome.
Karliun dejuste Usche siet,
Un flum ki en Saverne chiet;
Cil ki d'altre terre veneient
Par cele eue venir poeient. (ll. 10210–14)

With its rich palaces it resembled Rome. *Karliun* sits on the Usk, a river that flows into the Severn. Those who came from abroad could come via this river.

Although much condensing the *Historia*, this short passage notably picks up both on Geoffrey's comparison of Caerleon to Rome and on how Caerleon sits (*siet*) on the Usk, which connects it to the Severn, and, by extension, to transregional networks of water-travel. Similarly, in a passage of the *Itinerarium Cambriae* (1188) based on Geoffrey, Gerald of Wales describes Caerleon as possessing:

palatia immensa, aureis olim tectorum fastigiis *Romanos* fastus *imitantia*, eo quod a Romanis principibus primo constructa, (...) *Situs urbis egregius, super Oschæ flumen; navigio, mari influente, idoneum. Silvis et pratis urbs illustrata. Hic magni illius Arthuri famosam curiam legati adiere Romani.* (i.5, 55–56; my emphasis)

immense palaces, with the gold-covered gables of their roofs once *imitating the Romans*; they were first built by the great men of Rome. (...) [Caerleon] *is excellently situated on the River Usk; it is reachable by ship, when the tide rises sufficiently. The city is illuminated with woods and meadows.* Here the Roman legates came to the famous court of that great Arthur.

Again it is Caerleon's status as a onetime rival to Rome and its *location* that Gerald retains: Caerleon is well positioned and eminently *reachable*. The adjective *idoneus* carries the same senses of *appropriate* and *convenient* connoted by *bien seant*.¹⁸ As Michael Faletra (2014) has pointed out, both Wace and Gerald seek to consign Caerleon's greatness to the past: for Wace, in order to glorify the Anglo-Norman border garrison in the city (91); for Gerald, in order to transfer Welsh ecclesiastical authority to St. David's (164–65). It is noteworthy, however, that, even as they delimit its status, both Wace and Gerald cannot overlook Caerleon's equivalence to Roman grandeur, its well-placed location, and its maritime connections.

By contrast, Caerleon's connectivity is capitalised upon by texts much more politically predisposed to the seating of Arthur's capital in the southern Marches, with the *Brut y Brenhinedd* foremost among them. The Welsh *Brut* describes Arthur's Whitsun court thus:

daly llys a oruc yngkaer llion ar wysc. canys teckaf lle oed hwnnw yn ynys brydeyn. achyuoethockaf. ac adassaf y vrenhyn daly gwylua yndi. canys or neill tu yr dinas yd oed avon vawr dec vonhedic; val y gallei llongheu o eithavyon byt dyuot hyt yn adas. Ac or tu arall yr dinas yd oed gweirglodiev tec ehang gwastad a ssych; a foresteu tec adwyn. a brynnyeu tec aruchel eglur. Ac o vewn y gaer yd oed tei tec brenhiniawl. ar dinas hwnnw agynhebygit y ruvein. (167)

Arthur held court in *Kaer Llion ar Wysc*, since that was the fairest place in the Isle of Britain, and the wealthiest and the most suitable for a king to hold feasts in, for on the one side of the city was a river, great, fair and noble, such that ships from the farthest parts of the world could come there easily. And on the other side of the city were meadows, fair, broad, level, and dry, and fair, splendid forests, and fair, high, bright hills. And within the city were fair, kingly houses, and that city was likened to Rome.

The amplification of *Kaer Llion*'s status here is evident: it has become, for example, the wealthiest city (*cyuoethockaf*) and the comparison to Rome is also retained. But the *Brut*'s expansion of the *Historia* is most pointedly targeted at the connectedness of *Kaer Llion*. The *nobile flumen* has been upsized into an *avon vawr dec vonhedic* (large, fair, and noble river), which could transport travellers from *eithavyon byt*, an idiom translatable as literally *the ends of the earth*, situating *Kaer Llion* not just within a European, but a truly global scale. Again, *Kaer Llion*'s adjacent forests and meadows are present, but are now adorned with adjectives like *tec* (fair), *ehang* (wide), *aruchel* (lofty), and *eglur* (clear, open).

The *Brut* goes on to refer to the ecclesiastical status of *Kaer Llion*, referring to Julius and Aaron, and to the city's archiepiscopal status. It also then retains Geoffrey's addition of the scholarly *gymnasium*, though exchanging Geoffrey's two hundred *scholars* for two hundred *schools*: 'ac yd oed

¹⁸ Lewis and Short, 'idoneus' (a, um, adj.) I.
<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=idoneus&la=la&can=idoneus0 - lexicon>.

yna o ysgolhyoed deu cant ysgol o amryuaelyon keluydodeu. ac yn enwedig yd oed yno y sseith geluydyt. canys pennaf le ysgolhoet o ynys brydeyn oed caer llion ar wysc yna' (167–68; and in terms of schools, there were two hundred schools of various arts, and there were especially the seven arts, for *Kaer Llion ar Wysc* was at that time the chief location of schools in the Isle of Britain).

The *Brut* continues to amplify its source in the list of attendees at Arthur's court, embellishing with first names, and adding new attendees from even further afield, namely, the prince of *rwytnw* (Kievan Rus) and the prince of *conoman* (unidentified). Furthermore, the shift of power towards the west and north is even more heavily pronounced: the list loses all mention of London, Leicester, and Canterbury, but gains representatives from Shrewsbury, Durham, and Rheged (the northern British kingdom) (see Appendix 10, Fig. 10).

Finally, the *Brut* also amplifies *Kaer Llion*'s connectivity in its representations of the goods transported by the attendees. What in Geoffrey is limited to mules and horses (*mularum et equorum*; ix.156, l. 357) becomes in the *Brut*: 'meirch da. ac adar a chwn. athlyssieu mawr weirthiawc. ac eur llestri. a gwisgoed odidawc: o bali aphorffor assyndal ac ermyn' (169; good horses, and birds, and dogs, and jewels of great value, and gold vessels, and such clothes of satin and purple and sendal and ermine). Not only does this passage heighten the opulence of Arthur's court, but it also underlines its connectedness, since such luxury goods could only arrive via complex and extensive Eurasian trade routes. In short, the *Brut y Brenhinedd* presents us with Caerleon 2.0. It diminishes yet further the importance of English power centres, and it amplifies Geoffrey's *Kaerusk* into *Kaer Llion*, a cosmopolitan Welsh metropolis, a central hub in not only European, but properly global networks.

Beyond the *Brut*, there are other Welsh texts, Arthurian and otherwise, that also emphasise Caerleon's status as an especially well connected centre. *Gereint*, one of *Y Tair Rhamant* and based on Chrétien's *Erec*, opens with a description of Caerleon as the 'hygyrchaf lle yn y gyuoeth (...) y ar uor ac y ar dir' (ll. 3–4; the most accessible place in the kingdom [...] both by sea and by land).¹⁹ Similarly, in *Gereint*, *Kaer Llion*'s churches have expanded from two to thirteen, taken up with masses for various members of Arthur's court.

¹⁹ Helen A. Roberts (2004) suggests this opening as part of *Gereint*'s interest not, as in *Erec*, in chivalric ethics and the abstract landscape of romance, but in 'an economy of possession' (72): 'In contrast with the abstract court of the French romance [*Erec*], the idea of *gyuoeth* refers to the concrete and substantial' (60).

Another Red Book text, *Breuddwyd Maxen Wledig* refers to Caerleon's important position in the first British road network.²⁰ *Breuddwyd Maxen* probably dates to the mid-twelfth century, but its earliest written attestation is the Red Book. It is thus composed post-Geoffrey, but its narrative is set in the pre-Arthurian Roman period. *Breuddwyd Maxen* describes the dream of Emperor Maxen about the British princess Elen whom he eventually marries. As part of her marriage fee, Elen has three fortresses built: first is *Segontium* (Caernarfon), followed by *Moridunum* (Carmarthen), and *Isca* (Caerleon). The three forts are then immediately connected by Britain's first road network, linking North Wales to the South East and West: 'Odyna e medyllys Elen gwneithur priffyrd o pob caer idi hyt y gilid ar draus enys Brydein. O achau henne e gelwir wy fyrd Elen Lluydauc' (8; Then Elen thought to build main-roads from each fort to the others across the island of Britain. Because of this they are called the Roads of Elen Lluyddog). This literary account is, in fact, based on real-world geography: the Roman road from Aberconwy to Carmarthen is still known as *Sarn Helen*, with another section running from Neath (*Nidum*) to Brecon (*Cicucium*). Although not an Arthurian text *per se*, *Breuddwyd Maxen* is a post-Galfridian text that retroactively participates in the representations of the connectedness of *Isca* even before its development into Arthurian *Kaer Llion*.

It would be hard to overlook the political ideology that pervades these Welsh texts' aggrandisement of Caerleon into an impressively cosmopolitan, globally connected centre — and this pointedly at the expense of contemporary English power-centres. Yet, even in texts that are not politically disposed towards such an image (like in Gerald or Wace), Caerleon's connectedness remains. While Arthurian texts more widely praise the strategic locations of various court residences, the case study of Caerleon throws into particularly clear relief the networked character of Arthurian political geography, and the co-operation of the nonhuman world in that network. How then, we might ask, can we justify the 'peripheral' status of the Welsh Marches not only when they are home to so many Arthurian courts, but when those courts are represented as so well connected? The multiple, unmappable locations of Arthur's mobile court are also always *networked*, whether by sea, river, or road, to any number of other centres in Britain, Europe, and, ultimately, the world.

²⁰ In this, Caerleon might be said to resemble Carhaix, whose name may be derived from the Latin *quadruvium*, since it is located at the crossroads of six Roman roads. See Koch (2006, 1045).

5.4. Which Court?

Yet, the connections of Arthur's various courts arguably run even deeper. This final section examines another modality of connectivity, looking not at where the courts are located, nor at textual representations of their connectedness, but at the various ways in which the courts *refer* to each other. My suggestion here is, in essence, that all of Arthur's courts are inflected by the others, interconnecting in a kind of associative network created by their geographical and oral indeterminacy. First, I will demonstrate how in the copying process scribes freely associate one court with the others. Secondly, I will demonstrate how a single court can refer to multiple real-world locations and, conversely, how a single real-world location can refer to multiple courts. Finally, I will argue that Arthur's courts are fundamentally inter-referential in their very morphology.

Scribes alter courts in the copying process frequently and tellingly, and the high incidence of manuscript variance for court locations betrays their interchangeability. There is variation, for instance, in the quotation above from the non-cyclic *Prose Lancelot*: the town described as the one where Arthur most gladly sojourned (359; 16) is in Kennedy's base manuscript (Paris, BnF, fr. 768) *Carduel*, but she notes *Carlion* as a variant. Another example is provided by the manuscripts of Chrétien's *Charrette*. MSS T(AEG) — T being mid-thirteenth century — present Arthur's court at *Carlion* and *Camalot*: 'A un jor d'une Ascension | Fu venuz devers Carlion | Li rois Artus et tenu ot | Cort molt riche a Cama(a)lot' (46–47, n. 29; On one Ascension day the king Arthur came from towards Carlion and held a very lavish court at Cama(a)lot).²¹ MS C (Paris, BNF, fr. 794) — dated 1230–1240, known as the 'copie de Guiot', and base manuscript for Méla's edition — refers to neither of these courts, simply rhyming *ot* with *plot*. The inclusion of *Carlion* and *Cama(a)lot* in T(AEG) is conjecturably the result of the influence of other, possibly post-Chrétien Arthurian literature: the presence of *Cama(a)lot* is particularly suggestive, since it is otherwise unattested in Chrétien's work. Is it, as Méla conjectures (47, n. 29), an addition made under the influence of the *Prose Lancelot*? The Welsh triads provide another example of court variance. In Peniarth 50 (Bromwich's base manuscript), Triad 85 details Arthur's principle courts at *Kaerllion*, *Celli Wic*, and *Penryn Rioned*. However, as Bromwich notes (*TYP*, 223), this triad in its form in the *Enwau Ynys Prydein*, which she argues to be pre-Geoffrey, has *Aberffra(6)* in place of *Kaerllion ar Wysg*, while the similar Triad 1 has *Mynyw* (St David's) in

²¹ T = Paris, BnF, fr. 12560; A = Chantilly MS 472; E = Escorial, Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo, M.III.21; G = Princeton University Library, Garrett MS 125. For the quotation in its manuscript context, see Paris, BnF, fr. 12560, fol. 41v.

Kaerllion's stead (*TYP*, 1). Bronwich attributes the presence of *Kaerllion* in Triad 85 to Galfridian influence (*TYP*, 223).

In each instance, it is possible that court selection has been affected by the influence of other, possibly later texts (e.g. the *Historia*, the *Prose Lancelot*). What we may be dealing with, however, is not merely a philological conundrum; these scribal errors betray an underlying interchangeability of Arthurian courts, whereby one can be easily replaced by another, even by one invented and popularised after the text being copied. In a sense, the scribes can hardly be blamed. As we have seen, the court residences are described in similar terms (*bien asis*, *bien seanz*, *aaisiee*, etc.) and perform largely the same function, with very little distinction drawn between each court's identity. What these instances of manuscript variance demonstrate, then, is an associative network whereby each court might refer to and stand in for any other.

Inter-referential connections are pushed further by the mobility of court designations. The first example of this phenomenon concerns instances where the proper name of a single court refers to multiple real-world locations. The richest example of this is undoubtedly *Cardueil* and its variants, which consistently confound any effort conclusively to localise it. In certain texts, *Cardueil* seems to refer to Cardiff in the southern conquest Marches; in others, it seems to refer to Carlisle. This confusion is aggravated by the ambiguity of *Gales*: although it most obviously designates Wales, it may also refer to the *Hen Ogledd*, the Old North. This term refers to the northern British kingdoms, comprising mainly *Elmet* (West Yorkshire), *Gododdin* (Lothian and the Scottish Borders), *Rheged* (Galloway), and *Strathclyde* (Firth of Clyde). This referential tension is further exacerbated by the place name *Norgales*.

Even in texts where one particular designation seems secure, the reference remains mobile and multi-layered. Recounting the rise of its eponymous Scottish knight, the early thirteenth-century Old French *Fergus* and its later thirteenth-century Dutch-language translation *Ferguut* are good examples. Several critics have noted the remarkable precision of *Fergus's* Scottish geography, at least at the tale's outset.²² Clearly drawing on Chrétien's *Erec*, the text opens with Arthur announcing his intention to hunt a white stag in the forest of *Gorriende les Carduel* (2, l. 19; Gorriënde near Cardol), from which the stag escapes into a notably Scottish world: through the forest of *Gedeorde* (4, l. 35; Jedburgh, in southern Scotland), through the land of *Landemore* (6, l. 4; Lammermuir) and *Glascou* forest (6, l. 7;

²² See, for example, Micha (1959), Schmolke-Hasselmann ([1980] 1998, 251–52), Thomas (1993), Wenthe (2012).

Glasgow), *Aroie* (6, l. 10; Argyll), before being killed in *Ingeval* (6, l. 16; Innse Gall, the Hebrides).²³ The company then encounter Fergus in *Pelande* near the Irish Sea (9, l. 16; Pictland, possibly Galloway). Later, too, we are told that the king heads to *Corbelande* (166, l. 22; Cumberland) to ask the way to *Cardoil*.

This somewhat farcical wild goose chase across Scotland often supports readings of *Fergus* as an Arthurian parody.²⁴ However, the appearance of this Scottish topography is particularly jarring, since the court at the text's opening is located, as in *Erec*, in *Karadigan/Caradigaen* (Cardigan). Moreover, until we hear of the stag's trajectory, we have no reason to assume that *Gorriende* (a place name only attested in *Fergus*) is not *les Carduel*, with *Carduel* signifying Cardiff as it is seemingly does in *Erec* (where there is also no reason to presume the hunting company ever leaves Wales). As Schmolke-Hasselmann ([1980] 1998) has noted, the jump from Cardigan to Carlisle 'has provoked some surprise', and the reason behind it is probably the influence of *Erec* (252, n. 91). But what this jump dramatizes, more substantially, is the referential doubling of the place name *Carduell*, a signifier for two geographically diverse signifieds. Thus, when it refers to one, it cannot help also conjuring up the other. A similar point might be made for *Gales*. The reference to *Carduel en Gales* (20, l. 20), in Dutch *Cardoel in Galen* (l. 581), designates, given contextual information supplied by the narrative, Carlisle in the *Hen Ogledd*. But it cannot help also bringing to mind Cardiff in South Wales, particularly given that this is the referent in *Fergus*'s source, *Erec*, and that both texts begin in Wales at Cardigan.

Admittedly, this referential tension in *Carduel* is largely resolved in later, English-language texts, which opt more clearly for either Cardiff or, more often, Carlisle. Yet even here shifts occur. For example, the reference to *Kardoeil* (l. 5) in Marie de France's *Lanval* is recast in its English-language manifestations as *Kardevyle* (l. 8) in *Sir Launfal* but as *Carlile* (l. 4) in *Sir Landevale*. *Sir Launfal*'s *Kardevyle* is all the odder for that, according to Shepherd (1995, 351), *Sir Landevale* is 'very close' to what must have been one of *Sir Launfal*'s main sources (i.e. 'a relatively faithful Middle English translation of *Lanval*' [Shepherd 1995, 351]). Why, then, does *Sir Launfal* opt for Cardiff over Carlisle? Again, my interest lies less in the philological puzzle than in the literary effect. What these shifts demonstrate, in both *Fergus* and *Lanval*'s translations, is that the place name *Carduel* and its

²³ On these locations, see Schmolke-Hasselmann ([1980] 1998, 252, n. 92).

²⁴ See Freeman (1983), Owen (1984), Ferlampin-Acher (2003, esp. 38–41), Hunt (2005). For a 'straighter' reading of *Fergus*'s reworking of Chrétien and other Arthurian materials, see Schmolke-Hasselmann ([1980] 1998, 158–69).

variants instantiate an associative network of court locations, connecting Cardiff and Carlisle, South Wales and the *Hen Ogled*d in relationships of mutual referentiality.

If one mode of inter-referentiality sees a single court (like *Cardueil*) refer to two real-world sites, then another mode sees one real-world site refer to multiple courts. My chief example for this point comes from Chrétien's *Conte du Graal*, which, unremarkably enough, features *Carlion* and *Cardoeil* as principle residences of Arthur's court. There are, however, two other, more elusive courts that also crop up over the course of the narrative. The first is named *Dinasdaron* (attested at line 2672 and at line 2693 as *Dinasdaron en Guales*) and is described as one of Arthur's royal courts. The second, this time the court and/or land of another king, is called *Escavalon* (attested at lines 435, 4270, and 5244). There are, seemingly, no such places in South Wales. Yet, both are linked to Caerleon. If we read *Dinasdaron* as a hybrid term, composed of the Welsh noun *dinas* (city), the French possessive particle *de*, and — remembering that Aaron is one of the saints of Caerleon in Gildas, Bede, and Geoffrey — the name Aaron, then we arrive at a place name meaning City of Aaron, i.e. Caerleon.²⁵ Similarly, the place name *Escavalon*, although layered with a reference to Avalon, is also linked to Caerleon, given the latter's Latin designation as *Isca (Legionis)*.²⁶ Interestingly, several of the text's scribes make a similar connection, since MSS B (Méla's base manuscript), F, and U of the *Conte* all have *Carlion* for the second attestation of *Escavalon* at line 4720: 'devant le roi d'Escavalon, | qui est plus bes que Assalon' (before the king of Escavalon, who is fairer than Absalon).²⁷

In other words, *Carlion*, *Dinasdaron*, and *Escavalon* are three different ways of saying the same place. Because Caerleon is formulated under three different names composed of different philological, historiographical, and linguistic elements, it appears in three places at once. Put differently: the court of Caerleon is refracted into three different names that are then mapped across the British Isles as three different locations. Indeed, once crystallised as proper nouns, these courts take on lives of their own in subsequent literature: *Escavalon* crops up as belonging to various kings in the First and Second Perceval Continuations, the *Perlesvaus*, the *Vengeance Raguidel*, and the non-cyclic *Lancelot*. Similarly, *Dinasdaron* appears in both the non-cyclic *Lancelot* and in Wolfram's *Parzival*, both highly influential texts with sizeable manuscript dissemination. Mapped onto various locations

²⁵ I have reached this conclusion independently, though it is also suggested in *The Arthurian Name Dictionary* edited by Bruce (1999, 147).

²⁶ In the index volume to his edition of the Vulgate Cycle, Sommer (1916, 52) also makes this connection between Caerleon/Isca Legionis and Escavalon. Oddly, Sommer indexes *Karlyon* (but not *Carlion*) under *Escavalon* in this index volume.

²⁷ B = Berne, Burgerbibliothek, 354; F = Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 2943; U = Paris, BnF, fr. 12577.

within the Arthurian world, and transmitted to Arthurian texts in various places, languages, and periods; *Escavalon*, *Dinasdaron*, and *Carlion* continually refer back to one another like declinations of the same noun or conjugations of the same verb, connected in another inter-referential network.

The final point I wish to make regarding Arthurian courts' inter-referentiality concerns the morphological stability of their transmission. Take, for example, the vernacular forms of *Cardueil* attested in the texts encountered in this chapter: *Cardueil*, *Cardoeil*, *Cardoil*, *Carduil*, *Cardol*, *Kardoeil*, *Carduel*, *Cardole*, *Kardoel*, *Kardeloet*, *Karidôl*, *Karidæl*. For Caerleon, the forms are: *Carlion*, *Karlion*, *Karliun*, *Carlyon*, *Karlyoun*, *Carlioen*, *Karlioen*, *Kaer Llion*. To be sure, the phonetic qualities of these place names are modified in accordance with local vernacular or dialectal variation (though these mainly only affect vowel quality), and their graphemic representation is subject to scribal variation. Yet, there is a remarkable stability to the morphology of these place names, which creates a kind of soundscape that connects each court to the others. In the Arthurian textual encounter, when the listener hears the phoneme /ka(r/R)/ or the reader reads the grapheme *C/Ka(e)r*, the presence of an Arthurian court is instantly signalled, though any number of potential courts might be brought to mind (*Carahais*, *Caradigan*, *Cardueil*, *Carlion*, *Kaerusk*) in an associative network of courts that all sound the same, until the specific location is identified by subsequent morphological, graphemic, and phonetic components. Pushing further, in the context of an Arthurian opening scene merely the phoneme /k/ or grapheme *C/K* might summon up an even wider array of court locations (*Campercorentin*, *Camahalot*, *Celliwig*, *Cestre*) held in simultaneous association. In the moment before fuller identification, each court refers to and stands in for the others — in a sense *is* the others — because it looks and sounds just like them. In other words, the Arthurian world is as dependent on its soundscape as much as on its landscape in plotting its spatial relations and networks: it is less any one location that signifies Arthur's court than this labile phoneme.

This final section has argued that the interconnectedness of Arthur's courts is pushed even further by their interchangeability through manuscript variance, and secondly by the ambiguity of their geographic referents and phonetic formulations, that is, their land- and soundscapes. Even as one power-centre is read, uttered, copied, or heard, it refers back to the network of centres of which it is a part. Thus we reach the final formulation of our research question: how can we speak of a 'core' of cultural or political power when Arthurian literature presents us with a world of multiple power-centres

that resist simple mapping, that the mobile court travels to and between, that are represented as connected sites within texts, and that also, crucially, refer to each other across them?

Conclusion

I suggested in Chapters 1 and 2 that, by virtue of their engagement with French- and Latin-language literatures, communities in the Welsh Marches had purchase on expansive, even global geographies. That formulation might now be turned on its head. By virtue of their engagement with Arthurian literature, audiences across Europe had purchase on the geography of Wales and the March. The Arthurian world presents us with a vision of medieval political and cultural geography that has a decidedly western tilt. This is, in large part, a generic convention: even texts that have no vested interest in imagining such a world are bound to the genre's own internal geography. Indeed, it might be argued that the centrality of Wales to Arthurian literature is made possible *precisely* by its real-world peripherality. Perhaps there is a sense by which, as Busby's analysis of images of Ireland in French romance suggests (2017, 327), the Celtic world can be made central to the imaginary precisely because it remains geographically and politically peripheral in reality.

Yet, surely it makes more sense to argue that, as soon as the 'peripheral' becomes 'central' in any sense, the very binary of 'core' and 'periphery' begins to fall apart. Indeed, what I have been suggesting in this chapter is that, if Arthurian literature is evidence of anything, it is that medieval political and cultural geography need not be thought of in such terms. Instead, the Arthurian universe represents a model that is *networked*. We have seen this networking to be operative in four key ways: firstly, in the mapping of multiple Arthurian centres of power; secondly, in the mobility of Arthur's court in travelling between them; thirdly, in the connectedness of those centres; and, finally, in ways in which they refer back to one another across texts within their own associative networks.

I do not, for all that, wish to suggest that Arthurian literature is fundamentally or essentially pro-Welsh. Much of it is emphatically not and, as we saw in Wace, does much to delimit the potential pro-Welshness of the world's generic geography. Indeed, it would be foolish to seek to ascribe any single political programme to the entirety of Arthurian literature. One need look no further than the fierce debates over the politics of Geoffrey of Monmouth to see that Arthurian literature can be cast in

any number of political lights.²⁸ As a number of scholars have noted, the fact that medieval commentators of varying agendas and ideologies engaged with and translated Arthurian texts is testament to the genre's political pliability.²⁹ We have encountered a number of them in this chapter, from *Jaufre's* satirising of Northern French literary conventions to the aggrandising of Caerleon's status in the Welsh *Brut*.

If this chapter formulates a political reading of Arthurian literature, then it is this: it is not that Arthurian literature is devoted to consolidating or critiquing any *one* power or even any one *kind* of power, be it baronial, monarchic, etc. Rather, it is that the Arthurian world enables us to formulate a critique of the core-periphery *as a model of power*. Put differently: the Arthurian vision of political and cultural geography seems to me less a politically motivated reimagining of real-world geography than of the core-periphery model to which that geography has been subjected. In the Arthurian world, the traditional, Anglocentric view of medieval Britain with its south-eastern 'core' is thoroughly 'opened up and flattened out' not only into an alternative, westward-leaning geography, but into a series of eminently well-connected power-centres that protagonists travel to, from, and between within individual texts, and that also refer to each other intertextually. In short, the Arthurian world is networked.

Moreover, the multilingual, mobile, transregional networks represented *in* Arthurian literature are bodied forth nowhere better than in the networks *of* Arthurian literature. They are encapsulated, for example, in the many forms of Caerleon: *Isca*, *Isca Legionis*, *Urbs Legionis*, *Kaerusk*, *Dinasdaron*, *Dianazdrun*, *Escavalon*, *Ascalun*. *Carlion*, *Karlion*, *Karliun*, *Carlyon*, *Karlyoun*, *Carlioen*, *Karlioen*,

²⁸ Scholars have argued extensively over whether Geoffrey's *Historia* is a pro-Welsh or pro-Norman work. For arguments that the *Historia* is essentially pro-Norman, see in particular Faletra (2000; 2007; 2014, 73). Bloch (1983, 82) argues that it is pro-Angevin and anti-Capetian, while Roberts (1976) and Knight (1983, 63–66) note Geoffrey's Welsh sympathies, but suggest that his sympathies ultimately lie with the Anglo-Norman elite. Similarly, Finke and Shichtman (1993; 2004) suggest that the image of Arthur has served to articulate various institutional ambitions: Geoffrey's *Historia* was a way for the Norman elite to figure themselves as British rulers (other examples examined are the Wars of the Roses and the twentieth-century rise of Fascism). For arguments that the *Historia* is, on the contrary, pro-Welsh, see Tatlock (1950, 427), Barrow (1980–81, 305), Gillingham (1991), and Blacker (1994, 78).

²⁹ For example, Otter (1996) suggests that any apparent political affiliation in Geoffrey's *Historia* is underscored by its more fundamental interrogation of the very possibility of history writing. Warren (2000) considers the *Historia* to be a profoundly ambivalent text, whose ambivalence is, precisely, what makes it so appropriable by certain groups (Welsh, Breton, English, Anglo-Norman) according to their own political ideologies. Similarly, Over (2005) argues of Arthurian romance more widely that the pro-British image of Arthur in insular Welsh and Latin traditions is politically reprogrammed by Chrétien de Troyes as an anti-Angevin, pro-Capetian image of weak insular kingship, a perspective reimported to Wales in *Y Tair Rhamant*. Even though she considers Arthurian literature to be 'English national literature, irrespective of the language in which it was composed' (291), Schmolke-Hasselmann ([1980] 1998, 247) also admits this political manipulability of Arthurian literature when she describes how Arthurian verse material also provided a vehicle for articulating an anti-monarchical, baronial ideology during the reign of King John, with texts like *Yder*, *Le Vallet a la cote mautaille*, *Le Lai du cor*, and *Le Lai du cort mantel* all formulating critiques of kingship.

Kaer Llion. Several of these forms are direct linguistic adaptations of each other, while other seemingly unrelated forms are connected via a complex series of cross-cultural, multilingual, intertextual exchanges across great distances and over extended periods of time. The court of *Dianazdrun* in *Parzival*, for example, is indebted to, and further extends, a network of texts and manuscripts that transmit Caerleon as ‘the city of Aaron’, including Gildas, Bede, Geoffrey, Gerald, Chrétien, the first Perceval Continuator, and the author of the non-cyclic *Lancelot* text. As I hope this chapter has conveyed, Arthurian literature is not a phenomenon that magically radiates outwards from Île-de-France, reaching slowly out to the continent’s ‘peripheries’, ‘fringes’, and ‘edges’.³⁰ Rather, like the world it represents, it is itself a network of connected centres, of mobile texts, scribes, composers, compilers, manuscripts, narratives, motifs, and proper nouns.

It would be easy, for the purposes of this thesis, merely to flag up the centrality of Wales and the Marches in Arthurian literature as evidence against their traditional ‘peripheral’ status. This point is, I think, amply borne out by the discussion above. But this chapter has, I hope, pushed further. Ultimately, the Arthurian world seems so incommensurate with traditional understandings of the real-world political and cultural geographies of medieval Britain not because it imagines a world where the ‘periphery’ is made ‘core’, but because it resists such a model outright. It throws into question not only the ‘peripheral’ status of the Welsh Marches, but also the viability of that model in the first place. If Arthurian literature is anything to go by, then there are no margins in a medieval world where all the courts are connected.

³⁰ Even as they advocate for a pan-European, multilingual approach, Bart Besamusca and Jessica Quinlan accept and reproduce a core-peripheral model of literary history based on the centrifugal cultural influence of northern France. They seek to analyse works from the ‘fringes’ of Arthurian literature, which they describe as those ‘literary traditions located on the edges of Europe in a geographical sense, which were in some cases subject to a less immediate permeation by the influence of French courtly culture than the English and German’ (2012, 193).

Conclusion

On the wall of a choir aisle in Hereford Cathedral there hung, for many years, a map. The earliest known reference to it occurs in around 1684, when the antiquary Thomas Dingley (d. 1695) wrote: ‘Amo[n]g other curiosity in this Library [the Lady Chapel in Hereford Cathedral] are an Map of y[e] World dra[w]n on Vellum by a Monk kept in a frame w[ith] two doors w[ith] gilded and painted Letters and figures’ (1867–1868, i, clx). Such an observation of monastic production is, as Scott D. Westrem (2006, 203) notes, ‘not generally meant as praise in late-seventeenth-century England’.

The ‘curiosity’ subtly slighted by Dingley is, however, the largest *mappa mundi* to survive from the medieval period.¹ The map’s completion is generally dated to c. 1290–1310, though where it was produced remains uncertain. It is probably a copy of a world map made for Lincoln Cathedral by Richard of Battle I (d. 1278), canon of Lincoln and prebendary of Sleaford. Based on the Lincoln map, the creation of the Hereford map may have been begun in Lincoln by Richard of Battle II (d. 1326), possibly the nephew of Richard of Battle the elder (Barber 2006, 27). Richard of Battle II was a non-residentiary canon at Hereford, and appears in 1289 in the account roll of Richard Swinfield, Bishop of Hereford. He may, therefore, have ‘brought the map from Lincoln to Hereford at some time shortly before 1289’ (Morgan 2006, 122).

Another possibility is that the map was created *in Hereford*, commissioned by Bishop Richard in the period 1283 to 1317, probably due to Richard’s familiarity with the map in Lincoln, where he had previously been chancellor. The hypothesis of the map’s Hereford-based production is compelling, and is favoured by scholars like Martin Bailey (2006) and Sarah Arrowsmith (2015), who draw on dendrochronological evidence that has dated the felling of the oak for the map’s central wooden panel to 1289–1311, and shown that the oak was probably grown in Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, or Gloucestershire (Bailey 2006, 80).

It is likely that at least the latter stages of production occurred in Hereford. As M. B. Parkes (2006) has demonstrated, the copying of the text on the map is the work of a single scribe working c. 1290–1310, probably in Hereford. The scribe added or corrected the entries relating to Hereford and the Wye ‘and the degree of precision with which these entries were located makes it seem most likely

¹ The Hereford map has been printed in facsimile in Harvey and Westrem (2010). See also the online, interactive map: <https://www.themappamundi.co.uk/mappa-mundi/>

that he was working either in Hereford itself or in the vicinity' (115). The later work of the limner would, it follows, also be locatable to Hereford. Similarly, the artistic work (the drawing and colouring of the figures, birds, and animals) is, according to Nigel Morgan (2006), the work of a single artist, with another detailing the cities, and possibly another two working on the ornamental borders. Morgan dates this activity to the period *c.* 1285–1300 and he notes general parallels with art in the West Midlands and Hereford regions, though they 'are not specific enough to provide evidence of production in Hereford' (133).



Figure 1: The Hereford *mappa mundi*, Hereford Cathedral, *c.* 1285–1300. (Public Domain image).

In any case, the Hereford map provides us with a nexus of networks and connections, both historical and representational. Its own creation is enmeshed in transregional networks in the form of ecclesiastical links between Hereford and Lincoln Cathedrals. Similarly, Valerie Flint (1993) has argued that the map was part of Bishop Richard's efforts to have his predecessor, Thomas Cantilupe, canonised; indeed, Dan Terkla (2004) has suggested that the map was originally displayed in the cathedral's north transept near Cantilupe's tomb. Thus, even as the Cantilupe cult itself made Hereford Cathedral an important hub in pilgrimage networks (Bass 2017), the Hereford map figures as part of what Terkla calls 'the Cantilupe pilgrimage complex, a conglomeration of items and images which was for a time one of England's most popular pilgrimage destinations' (Terkla 2004, 131).

Finally, the map is itself a visualisation of the networks that cross and criss-cross the known, and in parts unknown, world. Of course, T-O world maps like the Hereford *mappa mundi* are often read as representative of a core-peripheral worldview. For example, in her discussion of T-O maps in relation to Wales, Natalia Petrovskaja (2015) writes that: 'The medieval Welsh view of the Orient is thus that of the man on the margins looking towards the centre. (...) Britain and Ireland were perceived as positioned on the very margin of the world, at a distance from its crucial centre' (4–5). Kathy Lavezzo (2006) reads the boom in world map production in England in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as representative of an English valorisation of their own peripherality. Although Lavezzo's work is valuable for thinking about the possible anxieties and fantasies of the English over their *own* perceived peripherality, readings like Lavezzo's and Petrovskaja's only hold if we follow them in accepting the core-periphery as the privileged spatial model operative in T-O maps, and as the model through which they ought to be interpreted.

Yet, as a corpus, *mappae mundi* are not governed by anything like a single, monolithic core-peripheral framework. For example, most T-O maps working to a Judeo-Christian framework place Jerusalem at their centre, though as Lavezzo notes (2006, 2–3), a number of maps, such as the Beatus map, place Rome at their centre instead according to secular, imperial frames of reference. Meanwhile, the map of western Europe accompanying Gerald of Wales *Topographia Hibernica* (first recension c. 1187) and *Expugnatio Hibernica* (first recension c. 1189) in Dublin, National Library of Ireland MS 700 (c. 1200) depicts Britain at the centre, with Ireland and Rome and the top and bottom margins respectively.² Other maps show multiple frameworks to be operating simultaneously, such as the

² Lavezzo (2016, 66–70) reads this map as strategically centring England in relation to Ireland and Rome.

Higden map, which places Rome *and* Jerusalem in its central region, accompanied by Mount Olympus, thus also incorporating a classical, Greek-mythological system. Similarly, the status of the maps' peripheral regions itself hovers between the abject and the sublime, as the realms both of monstrous races *and* of salvation and paradise (Lavezzo 2006, 14–16).

Thus, the fact that cartographers and onlookers can *re*-centre global geographies according to particular frameworks (be they Christian, imperial, classical, etc.), sometimes using multiple frameworks simultaneously, surely attests not only to the flexibility of medieval geographic thought, but also to the malleability and movability of *any* supposed 'core', as well as to the contingency of the core-periphery model on particular ideological frameworks. In other words, London, Paris, Rome, Jerusalem, etc., are only ever the 'core' insofar as we buy into the operative ideological framework that invests them with that privilege, that power. The core is, in other words, in the eye of the beholder: it is not *essential*, but, like any centre in a network, *positional*. The core is simply a centre raised, within a given ideological schema, to the status of hegemony, a hegemony that, this thesis has argued, can be disputed, deconstructed, and redistributed by thinking through, with, and in terms of networks.

Thus, *mappae mundi* like the Hereford map seem to invite core-peripheral readings at the same time as they fundamentally undermine them. Even as a given location is seemingly centralised, so is that centralisation traversed and undercut by networks of rivers, seas, and roads that snake between, around, and through the various landmasses, tracing lines of contact between all the points on the map. *Mappae mundi* do not peripheralise their 'margins' so much as they connect them, undercutting any kind of spatial hierarchy staked on a binary of centrality-peripherality. This does not necessarily mean that such maps embody what Lavezzo calls 'a universalism transcending local, regional, and national distinctions' (2006, 50); rather, they visualise a 'flattening out of the territory'. Once we resist the ideological interpolation to centralise, maps like the one in Hereford can be read not as showing the core-periphery in action, but as dramatising that 'redistribution of the local' called for by ANT: they quite literally chart the world as a series of transversally interconnected local sites.

Moreover, the fact that such a world map was present and probably produced in Britain's own supposed 'periphery', in the Marches of Wales, is itself loaded and significant. Indeed, the Hereford map, in many ways, makes visible the point that I have been arguing throughout this thesis in relation to other cultural products from the Welsh Marches. As both images and artefacts, texts and manuscripts, as objects both conceptual and material, they both represent and perform the investment

of the so-called ‘periphery’ in a truly global geography in ways that not only counteract that ‘peripheral’ status, but that more searchingly question the model by which such ‘peripherality’ is ascribed.

Of course, it might be protested that the Hereford world map, like many of the literary texts analysed in this thesis, in fact only represents the worldview of small, elite social groups, be they secular or religious. It would be a fair critique. The problem is partly disciplinary: working on literary texts often means dealing with the culture of literate classes. I hope, however, that this problem has been somewhat mitigated by my engagement with literature in a number of languages. Reading literature in English and Welsh has allowed for a closer engagement with more ‘popular’ literatures, though as discussed in the Introduction (§4) and Chapter 4, the equation of insular French with strictly elite classes, particularly in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, also needs to be rethought. I would also stress, additionally, that none of the case studies in this thesis operates on anything like the level of an international elite. Take, for instance, the case of the Ludlow scribe as discussed in Chapter 1: although once thought to be attached to the towering figures of Roger Mortimer and Adam of Orleton, it is much more likely that the scribe served a lower-ranking cadet branch of the Mortimer family, or indeed a family of the knightly-mercantile class like the Stokesays. Similarly, although clearly a wealthy family, the Tomases of Cwm Tawe were hardly movers on the international stage. And, indeed, although produced and housed in the Cathedral, the Hereford map, hanging by the Cantilupe shrine, might have been viewed by any number of pilgrims of all social classes from near and far.³

Therefore, by tracing three vibrant, multilingual Marcher microcultures in the late twelfth, early fourteenth, and late fourteenth centuries, this thesis has argued that communities in the Marches were actively engaged in supralocal literary, philosophical, and ideological developments across medieval Europe, an engagement often facilitated by proficiency in French. Moreover, by submitting the cultural products of those locales to a new mode of networked literary analysis, I have argued that these Marcher milieus show themselves to be highly connected centres who consider themselves as agents on a global stage, and this in ways that are, to varying extents, political. Frequently, representations of the regions’ connectedness go hand in hand with resistance to the workings of the hegemonic power, sometimes obliquely, sometimes in ways dramatised by the texts themselves.

³ As Ian Bass (2017) writes, ‘The cult was a great leveller of society, in which one can find the kings of England in pilgrimage alongside the populace of the locality. Those who were destitute might end up rubbing shoulders with the wealthy’ (17).

I have, therefore, been attempting to recuperate the cultural histories of regions that did not exercise hegemony in the medieval period, that (perhaps as a consequence) do not follow teleological narratives of nation-state development, and whose multilingual cultural products do not neatly fit into modern scholarly categories organised by nineteenth-century national philologies. The Marches today bear witness to the violence of modern nationalisation, carved up by the political boundaries of Wales and England, with little respect for those whose lives and identities cross languages and borders. As we have seen, external medieval commentators had difficulty categorising the March, and the period saw border regions and perspectives collapsed into pure Welshness (*Hereford in Wallie*) or else assimilated to flat Englishness (*nunc autem Anglia*). However, for modern scholars to replicate that nationalising violence (as countless do when referring to these works, poets, patrons, and scribes as ‘English’ or ‘Welsh’) poses a number of ethical problems.

Yet, this thesis has, I hope, done more than simply disprove the peripherality of the Welsh Marches within the terms of the core-periphery. Its ultimate aim has, throughout, been to use my case studies to question more fundamentally the viability of that model, and, by drawing on the insights of network and actor-network theory, to formulate an alternative, more ethical mode of conceptualising medieval cultural and political geographies, and of reading medieval texts. In short: this thesis proposes that thinking with networks might provide a new hermeneutical model that restores cultural and political agency to erstwhile ‘peripheral’ regions via close examination of their cultural products.

Nor is this reading limited purely to analyses *of* networks. As we have seen, reading *with* networks sensitises us to the political colourations and implications bound up in representations not only of networks themselves (Chapter 2), but also of the nonhuman world (Chapter 3) and of language (Chapter 4). It thus opens up new ways of engaging with fields such as posthumanism and object-oriented ontologies, while also shedding new light on how we might think politically about medieval languages in particular multilingual contexts. Finally, Chapter 5 outlined how networks might help us approach a pan-European genre of medieval literature, enabling us not only to re-evaluate the status of the Welsh Marches as seen from without, but also to glimpse medieval conceptualisations of networked political and cultural geographies.

I do not, of course, wish to suggest that I am the first to critique, or to attempt to revise, the core-periphery model. As noted in the Introduction and throughout this thesis, a number of recent scholarly works and projects have made valuable contributions to this effort. What I hope to have

achieved in this thesis, however, is an outline of a critical methodology that provides a more rigorous, theoretically robust way to think and write about medieval texts and their contexts that might avoid certain intellectual missteps degenerating into hierarchical, core-peripheral thinking.

Thus, this work might be developed in a number of ways, not least by its application to comparable contexts in the Marches, Wales, and elsewhere. Indeed, I fully accept that this thesis, partly due to its case-study approach, offers no exhaustive account of literary culture(s) in the Marches. Other texts might have been more thoroughly discussed, such as *Ancrene Wisse* or the texts of Gerald of Wales (though given the considerable bodies of critical literature already devoted to these texts, I felt that their inclusion in this thesis was somewhat less urgent). Other locations and timeframes might equally have been selected: a fourth Marcher context that I suspect may have been a particularly fruitful case study is the region of Denbigh, given its Conwy and Dee Valley links, Irish and North Sea connections, its border with Gwynedd, and the importance of centres like St Asaph Cathedral and the Cisterican monastery of Valle Crucis.

This methodology might equally be explored in relation to *pura Wallia*. Strata Florida, for example, would have provided an interesting test case, with its connections to the White Book of Rhydderch and the Hendregadredd manuscript, or Llanbadarn Fawr, with its early scholarly community under Sulien and Rhigyfarch, its Irish Sea zone connections, and its later importance for Dafydd ap Gwilym.⁴ Beyond Wales, it might be usefully brought to bear on other examples from that so-called ‘Celtic Fringe’ (such as Scotland, the Scottish Marches, Cornwall, Brittany, the Kingdom of the Isles), or indeed from other regions subsumed by the category of ‘England’ (such as Yorkshire or the Fens). Of course, a number of these contexts would require an alteration of temporal parameters: this project has largely remained within the twelfth to fourteenth centuries; it would be interesting, however, to see the approach used by scholars working on the early or later Middle Ages, or even on the early modern period. Similarly, the methodology developed here need not be restricted to the

⁴ On the literary culture of Llanbadarn Fawr, see Chadwick (1958), Lapidge (1973), Peden (1981), Henley (2016), Fulton (2016, 442–44). Annalee C. Rejhon (1984, 71–89) also points to Llanbadarn as the site for the production in c. 1200–50 of *Cân Rolant* (the Welsh version of the *Chanson de Roland*), and to its monastic networks and Scandinavian links as likely routes of transmission. Petrovskaia (2009, 96–98) formulates an alternative account of *Cân Rolant*’s transmission, turning instead to the Llanbadarn-Deheubarth region, and pointing to the interactions of the Braose Marcher lords, the princes of Deheubarth, and the Cistercian foundations in Wales and the March. Much of the debate hinges on differing identifications of the ‘Reinallt’ mentioned as the text’s patron in the so-called ‘note to Reinallt’ present in a number of manuscript witnesses, and who is referred to as ‘urenhin yr ynyssed’ (king of the isles): Rejhon considers this an allusion to Rognvaldr Guðrøðarson, King of the Isle of Man (1187–1229), while Petrovskaia makes a case for Reginald (Reynault) de Braose (d. 1228). Either way, Llanbadarn’s status as a politically and culturally connected centre is clear. Finally, on the Europeanism of Dafydd ap Gwilym, whose work is almost certainly influenced by the *Roman de la Rose*, see Breeze (2008), Edwards (1996, 158–65, 214–33; 2010), Bromwich (1986, esp. 73–75).

discipline of literary studies. It might be usefully adapted by historians — indeed, I have briefly indicated elsewhere how this might be done (Lampitt 2017) — or by those working in art history, archaeology, etc.

Finally, in terms of its thematic applications, reading with networks need not be limited to the nonhuman or to questions of language. As noted in Chapter 1, there is significant conceptual overlap with other revisionist reading practices like queer theory, insofar as both represent decentring moves. Similarly, there is, I think, scope for feminist appropriations of this network methodology — indeed, such a possibility almost became a chapter of this thesis. For example, the role of female religious houses in textual dissemination and production might be analysed from a network perspective, as might the role of queens and noblewomen. Feminist reading practices might also productively retool networked ones. For example, the works of Hue de Rotelande have frequently (and rightly) been noted for their relentless misogyny (Krueger 1993, 73–82; Gaunt 1995, 114–15; Kocher 2008). Yet, counter-reading from a networked perspective, we might point to women across *Ipomedon* and *Protheselaus* (like La Fiere, Ismene, Medea, and the Pucele de l’Isle), who are all key to the texts’ mobilising of far-stretching networks via kinship links, love interests, or ties of feudal vassalage. Indeed, the narrative of *Protheselaus* sees its hero both imprisoned and liberated by women, while, even in the midst of battle, Medea can be found furiously writing letters and missives to her many allies. Thus, reading with networks might be recalibrated by feminist perspectives to restore agency not only to figures marginalised by region, but also by gender. Put differently: I have, in this thesis, limited my deployment of networks’ critique and revision of the core-periphery as a mode of critiquing and revising *Anglo*-centrism; it might, however, be usefully translated by other politico-theoretical perspectives as a mode of critiquing and revising of other logics of centrism, be they andro-, anthropo-hetero-, or cis-centric.

In David Wallace’s 2004 work *Premodern Places*, there is a chapter entitled ‘Dante in Somerset’. In it, Wallace comments on the apparent dissonance that the title generates for readers with perspectives coloured by twentieth-century conceptions of British cultural geography: “‘Somerset,’ today, is also a place-name evocative of rural quietude, if not pathos; so the notion of “Dante in Somerset” strikes English readers, or readers who have spent much time in England, as incongruous and faintly comical’ (140).

A very similar point might be made about the Welsh Marches, which, when they (rarely) appear in modern popular and political culture are consistently marred by their ‘peripherality’. Today, the term, which generally designates only the England-Wales border regions, is usually calculated to conjure up the image of a secluded land of quaint, picture-postcard villages, the poster-child of conservative, capitalist, *Escape to the Country* fantasies, the Brexit-fuelled wet-dream of a white, monolingually Anglophone rural idyll.

Thus, the jarring disparity of ‘Dante in Somerset’ might equally be detected in ‘*Ipomedon* in Credenhill’, ‘Odorico in Cwm Tawe’, ‘the Harley scribe in Ludlow’, or even, indeed, ‘the Hereford *mappa mundi*’. Yet there they are, evidence of these regions’ multilingual, cosmopolitan, global pasts. In our present climate of aggressive insularism, white supremacism, and xenophobic nationalism, such pasts we might do well to remember.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Contents of Harley 2253*

* Based on Fein (2015a, i, 477–80)

IF = Insular French

L = Latin

ME = Middle English

| Booklet | Art. no. | Folios | Scribe | Language | Text Name | Text Known As |
|----------------|----------|-----------|--------|----------|---|---|
| 1 (quires 1–2) | 1 | 1ra–21vb | A | IF verse | Vitas Patrum | The Lives of the Fathers |
| | 1a | 21vb–22ra | A | IF verse | Thais | The Story of Thais |
| 2 (quires 3–4) | 2 | 23ra–33va | A | IF verse | Herman de Valenciennes, La Passioun Nostre Seignour | Herman de Valenciennes, The Passion of our Lord |
| | 3 | 33va–39rb | A | IF verse | De la Passioun Jhesu | The Gospel of Nicodemus |
| | 3a | 39rb | A | IF prose | Epistle a Tiberie | The Letter of Pilate to Tiberias |
| | 3b | 39va–41va | A | IF prose | Epistle a Claudie l'emperour | The Letter of Pilate to Emperor Claudius |
| | 4 | 41va–43vb | A | IF prose | De seint Johan le Ewageliste | The Life of Saint John the Evangelist |
| | 5 | 43vb–45vb | A | IF prose | De seint Johan le Baptist | The Life of Saint John the Baptist |
| | 6 | 45vb–47vb | A | IF prose | De seint Bartholomeu | The Life of Saint Bartholomew |
| | 7 | 47vb–48vb | A | IF prose | Passioun seint Piere | The Passion of Saint Peter |
| 3 (quire 5) | 8. | 49r–50v | B | IF verse | ABC a femmes | ABC of Women |
| | 9. | 51ra–52va | B | IF verse | De l'Yver et de l'Esté | Debate between Winter and Summer |
| | 10. | 52va | C | ME prose | Vorte make cynople | How to Make Red Vermilion |
| | 11. | 52va | C | ME prose | Vorte temprene asure | How to Temper Azure |
| | 12. | 52vb | C | ME prose | Vorte make gras-grene | How to Make Grass-Green |
| | 13. | 52vb | C | ME prose | Vorte maken another maner grene | How to Make Another Kind of Green |
| | 14. | 52vb | C | ME prose | Yet for gaude-grene | Another for Yellow-Green |
| | 15. | 52vb | C | ME prose | Vorte couche selverfoyl | How to Apply Silverfoil |
| | 16. | 52vb | C | ME prose | Vorte maken iren as hart as stel | How to Make Iron as Hard as Steel |
| | 17. | 52vb | C | ME prose | Vorte maken blankplum | How to Make White Lead |
| 4 (quire 6) | 18. | 53ra–54vb | B | L prose | Incipit vita sancti Ethelberti | The Life of Saint Ethelbert |
| | 19. | 54vb | B | L verse | Anima christi, sanctifica me | Soul of Christ, Sanctify Me |
| | 20. | 55ra–b | B | IF verse | Quant voy la revenue d'yver | A Goliard's Feast |
| | 21. | 55va–56vb | B | ME verse | Alle herkneth to me nou | Harrowing of Hell |
| | 22. | 57r–58v | B | ME verse | In a thestri stude Y stod | Debate between Body and Soul |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|------|----------------|---|----------|---|-----------------------------------|
| | 23. | 58v–59r | B | ME verse | Sitteth alle stille ant herkneth to me | A Song of Lewes |
| | 24. | 59r–v | B | IF verse | Chaunter m'estoit | Lament for Simon de Montfort |
| | 24a. | 59v | B | IF verse | Charnel amour est folie | Carnal Love Is Folly |
| | 24a* | 59v | B | L verse | Momentaneum est quod delectat | What Allures Is Momentary |
| | 24b. | 59v | B | ME verse | Erthe toc of erthe | Earth upon Earth |
| | 25. | 59v–61v | B | ME verse | Lystneth, lordynges! | The Execution of Sir Simon Fraser |
| | 25a. | 61v | B | ME verse | Lord that lenest us lyf | On the Follies of Fashion |
| | 26. | 61v–62v | B | IF verse | Enseignement sur les amis | Lesson for True Lovers |
| | 27. | 62v | B | ME verse | Middelerd for mon wes mad | The Three Foes of Man |
| 5 (quires 7–11) | 28. | 63r–v | B | ME verse | Ichot a burde in a bour | Annot and John |
| | 29. | 63v | B | ME verse | Bytuene Mersh ant Averil | Alysoun |
| | 30. | 63v | B | ME verse | With longyng Y am lad | The Lover's Complaint |
| | 31. | 64r | B | ME verse | Ich herde men upo mold | Song of the Husbandman |
| | 32. | 64va–65vb | B | ME verse | Herketh hideward ant beoth stille | The Life of Saint Marina |
| | 33. | 66r | B | ME verse | Weping haveth myn wonges wet | The Poet's Repentance |
| | 34. | 66v | B | ME verse | I ryden by Rybbesdale | The Fair Maid of Ribblesdale |
| | 35. | 66v–67r | B | ME verse | In a fryht as Y con fare fremede | The Meeting in the Wood |
| | 36. | 67r | B | ME verse | A wayle whyt ase whalles bon | A Beauty White as Whale's Bone |
| | 37. | 67va–68va | B | IF verse | Gilote e Johane | Gilote and Johane |
| | 38. | 68va–70rb | B | IF prose | Les pelrinages communes | Pilgrimages in the Holy Land |
| | 39. | 70rb–v | B | IF prose | Les pardouns de Acres | The Pardons of Acre |
| | 40. | 70va/71ra/71va | B | ME verse | Ne mai no lewed lued libben in londe | Satire on the Consistory Court |
| | 41. | 70vb/71rb | B | ME verse | Of a mon Matheu thohte | The Labourers in the Vineyard |
| | 43. | 71va | B | ME verse | Lenten ys come with love to toun | Spring |
| | 44. | 71vb–72ra | B | ME verse | In May hit murgeth when hit dawes | Advice to Women |
| | 45. | 72ra–va | B | ME verse | Heye Louerd, thou here my bone | An Old Man's Prayer |
| | 46. | 72va–73rb | B | ME verse | Ichot a burde in boure bryht | Blow, Northern Wind |
| | 47. | 73r–v | B | ME verse | Alle that beoth of huerte trewe | The Death of Edward I |
| | 48. | 73v–74v | B | ME verse | Lustneth, lordinges, bothe yonge ant olde | The Flemish Insurrection |
| | 49. | 75ra–b | B | IF verse | Marie, pur toun enfaunt | The Joys of Our Lady |
| | 50. | 75rb–va | B | ME verse | Suete Jesu, king of blysse | Sweet Jesus, King of Bliss |
| | 51. | 75va–b | B | ME verse | Jesu Crist, heovene kyng | Jesus Christ, Heaven's King |
| | 52. | 75vb | B | ME verse | Wynter wakeneth al my care | A Winter Song |
| | 53. | 76r | B | ME verse | When Y se blosmes springe | A Spring Song on the Passion |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------|------|-------------|---|------------------|--|--|
| | 54. | 76r | B | IF verse | Ferroy chaunsoun | I Pray to God and Saint Thomas |
| | 55. | 76r | B | Trilingual verse | Dum ludis floribus | While You Play in Flowers |
| | 56. | 76v–77r | B | IF verse | Quant fu en ma juvente | Song on Jesus' Precious Blood |
| | 57. | 77va | B | IF verse | Marie, mere al Salveour | Mary, Mother of the Savior |
| | 58. | 77vb–78va | B | ME verse | Dulcis Jesu memoria | Jesus, Sweet Is the Love of You |
| | 59. | 78vb–79rb | B | IF verse | Une petite parole | Sermon on God's Sacrifice and Judgment |
| | 60. | 79rb–vb | B | ME verse | Stond wel, moder, under rode | Stand Well, Mother, under Rood |
| | 61. | 79vb | B | ME verse | Jesu, for thi muchele miht | Jesus, by Your Great Might |
| | 62. | 80ra | B | ME verse | I syke when Y singe | I Sigh When I Sing |
| | 63. | 80rb | B | ME verse | Nou skrinketh rose ant lylie-flour | An Autumn Song |
| | 64. | 80v | B | ME verse | My deth Y love, my lyf Ich hate | The Clerk and the Girl |
| | 65. | 80v–81r | B | ME verse | When the nyhtegale singes | When the Nightingale Sings |
| | 66. | 81r–v | B | ME verse | Blessed be thou, Levedy | Blessed Are You, Lady |
| | 67. | 81va–b | B | ME verse | Ase Y me rod this ender day | The Five Joys of the Virgin |
| | 68. | 82ra–83r | B | ME verse | Herkne to my ron | Maximian |
| | 69. | 83r | B | IF & ME verse | Mayden, moder milde | Maiden, Mother Mild |
| | 70. | 83r–92v | B | ME verse | The Geste of Kyng Horn | King Horn |
| | 71. | 92v–105r | B | IF prose | Estoyres de la Bible | Old Testament Stories |
| | 72. | 105va–b | B | L prose | Nomina librorum bibliotece | Names of the Books of the Bible |
| 6 (quires 12–14) | 73. | 106r | B | ME verse | God that al this myhtes may | God Who Wields All This Might |
| | 74. | 106ra–107rb | B | ME verse | Lustneth, alle, a lutel throwe | The Sayings of Saint Bernard |
| | 75. | 107va–109vb | B | IF verse | Le jongleur d'Ely e le roi d'Angleterre | The Jongleur of Ely and the King of England |
| | 75a. | 110ra–va | B | IF verse | Les trois dames qui troverunt un vit | The Three Ladies Who Found a Prick |
| | 76. | 110vb–111rb | B | IF verse | Le dit des femmes | The Song on Women |
| | 77. | 111rb–vb | B | IF verse | Le blasme des femmes | The Blame of Women |
| | 78. | 112ra–b | B | IF verse | Nicholas Bozon, Femmes a la pye | Nicholas Bozon, Women and Magpies |
| | 79. | 112rc–113vc | B | IF verse | Un sage honme de grant valour | Urbain the Courteous |
| | 80. | 113vb–114v | B | IF verse | Talent me prent de rymer e de geste fere | Trailbaston |
| | 81. | 114v–115r | B | ME verse | Mon in the mone stond ant strit | The Man in the Moon |
| | 82. | 115va–117ra | B | IF verse | Le chevalier e la corbaylle | The Knight and the Basket |
| | 83. | 117ra–118rb | B | IF verse | De mal mariage | Against Marriage |
| | 84. | 118rb–vb | B | IF verse | La gagure, ou L'esquier e la chaunbrere | The Wager, or The Squire and the Chambermaid |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|------|-------------|---|------------------|---|---|
| | 85. | 119ra–121ra | B | ME verse | A bok of swevenyng | A Book of Dreaming |
| | 86. | 121ra–122va | B | IF verse | Ordre de bel ayse | The Order of Fair Ease |
| | 87. | 122vb–124va | B | IF verse | Le chevaler qui fist parler les cons | The Knight Who Made Vaginas Talk |
| | 88. | 124va–125r | B | ME verse | Of rybauds Y ryme ant red o my rolle | Satire on the Retinues of the Great |
| | 89. | 125ra–127ra | B | ME verse | Mon that wol of wysdam heren | Hending |
| | 90. | 127rb–va | B | ME prose | When man as mad a kyng of a capped man | The Prophecy of Thomas of Erceldoune |
| | 91. | 127va–b | B | IF prose | La destinccioun de la estatute Jesu Crist Nostre Seigneur | Distinguishing Features of the Bodily Form of Jesus Christ Our Lord |
| | 92. | 128r | B | ME verse | Lutel wot hit any mon hou love hym haveth ybounde | The Way of Christ's Love |
| | 93. | 128r–v | B | ME verse | Lutel wot hit any mon hou derne love may stonde | The Way of Woman's Love |
| | 94. | 128v–129v | B | IF prose | Enseignements de saint Lewis a Philip soun fitz | The Teachings of Saint Louis to His Son Philip |
| | 95. | 129v–130v | B | IF prose | L'enqueste que le patriarche de Jerusalem fist | The Land of the Saracens |
| | 96. | 131r | B | IF prose | Les armes des roys | Heraldic Arms of Kings |
| | 97. | 131v–132r | B | L prose | Scriptum quod peregrini deferunt | Letter for Pilgrims on the Relics at Oviedo |
| | 98. | 132r–133r | B | L prose | Legenda de sancto Etfrido, presbitero de Leoministria | The Legend of Saint Etfrid, Priest of Leominster |
| | 99. | 133v | B | IF & L prose | Quy chescun jour de bon cuer cest oreisoun dirra | Prayer for Protection |
| 7 (quire 15) | 100. | 134r | B | IF prose | Quant vous levez le matyn | Occasions for Angels |
| | 101. | 134r | B | IF prose | Quy velt que Dieu sovyegne de ly | Occasions for Psalms in French |
| | 102. | 134v | B | IF verse | Gloria in excelsis Deo en fraunceis | Glory to God in the Highest in French |
| | 103. | 134v | B | L prose | Confiteor tibi, Deus, omnia peccata mea | Prayer of Confession |
| | 104. | 134v–135r | B | IF verse & prose | Glorious Dame | Prayer on the Five Joys of Our Lady |
| | 105. | 135r | B | L prose | Rex seculorum et Domine dominator | Prayer for Contrition |
| | 106. | 135r | B | IF prose | Um doit plus volentiers juner le vendredy | Reasons for Fasting on Friday |
| | 107. | 135r | B | IF prose | Quy est en tristour | Seven Masses to Be Said in Misfortune |
| | 108. | 135v | B | IF prose | Cely que fra ces messes chaunter | Seven Masses in Honour of God and Saint Giles |
| | 108a | 135v | B | IF prose | Je vous requier, Jaspar, Melchior, e Baltazar | Prayer to the Three Kings |
| | 109. | 135v–136r | B | L prose | Mundus iste totus quoddam scaccarium est | All the World's a Chess Board |
| | 109a | 136r | B | IF prose | Quy chescun jour denz seissaunte jours | Three Prayers That Never Fail |
| | 110. | 136r–v | B | L prose | Contra inimicos si quos habes | Occasions for Psalms in Latin |
| | 111. | 136v–137r | B | IF prose | Seint Hillere archevesque de Peyters ordina ces salmes | Occasions for Psalms Ordained by Saint Hilary of Poitiers |

| | | | | | | |
|--|------|-----------|---|--------------|--|--|
| | 112. | 137r | B | L prose | Eulotropia et celidonia | Heliotrope and Celandine |
| | 113. | 137r–v | B | L prose | De interrogandi moribundis beati Anselmi | Saint Anselm's Questions to the Dying |
| | 114. | 137v–138v | B | IF & L verse | Dieu, roy de magesté | Against the King's Taxes |
| | 115. | 138v–140r | B | IF prose | Contemplacioun de la passioun Jesu Crist | Seven Hours of the Passion of Jesus Christ |
| | 116. | 140v | B | L prose | De martirio sancti Wistani | The Martyrdom of Saint Wistan |

Appendix 2: Scribal Hands of Harley 2253



Fig 2. © British Library Board. London, British Library, Harley MS 2253, f. 1r. This first folio shows the hand of scribe A.

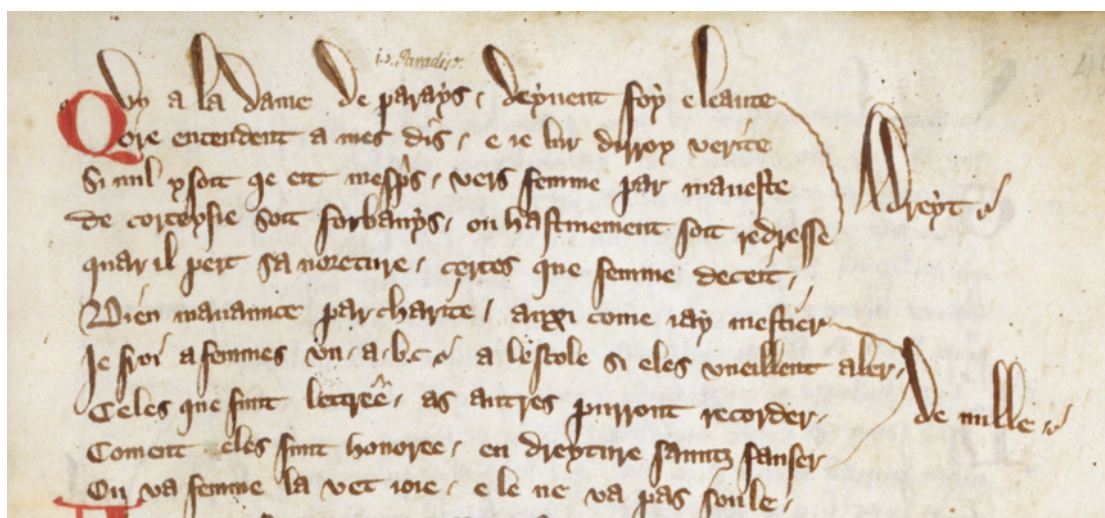


Fig. 3. © British Library Board. London, British Library, Harley MS 2253, f. 49r. This is the first folio showing the hand of scribe B (the Ludlow scribe).

Appendix 3: The Glamorgan Manuscripts

| MS | Scribe(s) | Book | Key Texts |
|------------------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| Jesus 111 | RB scribe A Hywel Fychan RB scribe C | Red Book of Hergest | Various |
| Peniarth 12 | Later scribes + Hywel Fychan fragment | Red Book of Talgarth | <i>Ystoria Ludicar</i> (fragment) |
| Llanstephan 27 | Hywel Fychan (main scribe) | | <i>Ystoria Lucidar</i> (fragment) |
| Cardiff 3.242 | Cardiff 3.242 hand A (main scribe) Hywel Fychan (fragment) | | Medical texts |
| Jesus 57 | Hywel Fychan (main scribe) | | <i>Llyfr Blegywryd</i> |
| Philadelphia 8680.O | Hywel Fychan (main scribe) | | <i>Ystoria Dared; Brut y Brenhinedd</i> |
| Peniarth 11 | Hywel Fychan (only scribe) | | <i>Y Seint Greal</i> |
| Peniarth 32 | RB scribe C (main scribe) | Llyfr Teg | <i>Llyfr Iorwerth</i> (RB scribe C); <i>Ystoria Adaf</i> |
| Peniarth 190 | RB scribe C (only scribe) | | <i>Ystoria Lucidar</i> |
| Llanstephan 4 | RB scribe C (only scribe) | | Welsh Bestiary (fragment) |
| Peniarth 19 | RB scribe C (only scribe) | | <i>Ystoria Dared;</i> <i>Brut y Brenhinedd;</i> <i>Brut y Tywysogion;</i> <i>Brut y Saesson</i> |
| Llanstephan 2 | Dafydd Bychan | | <i>Ffordd y Brawd Odrig</i> |

Appendix 4: Fouke's Travels

- Ludlow
- Northern France / Flanders
- Winchester
- Alberbury
- Brittany
- Higford
- Babbinswood, Oswestry
- Forest of Braydon, Wiltshire
- Forest of Kent
- Higford
- Canterbury
- March of Scotland
- Alberbury
- Shrewsbury Castle
- Rhuddlan
- (Presumably to Powys to broker peace with Gwenwynwyn)
- Bala
- Gué Gymele
- Bala
- Whittington
- Middle Pass (?)
- Whittington
- Canterbury
- Higford
- Bala
- Dover
- Paris
- Beteloye, island off coast of Spain
- Tunis
- Westminster
- Brittany
- New Forest
- Westminster
- Court of Earl Marshal
- Abingdon
- Wantage
- Chester
- Ireland
- Whittington

Appendix 5: The *Moch* Travels

(For these identifications, which often remain uncertain, see the explanatory notes in Davies 2007, 241–42, nn. 50–51)

- Caer Dathyl (somewhere on the coast between Dinas Dinlle and Caernarfon)
- Pryderi's court in Rhuddlan Teifi (Ceredigion)
- Mochdref (possibly near Nant-y-moch, near Aberystwyth)
- Elenid (southern Powys, near Plynlimon)
- Mochdref (between Ceri and Arwystli)
- Mochnant (a commote between Denbighshire and Montgomeryshire)
- Mochdref in the *cantref* of Rhos (between Llandudno and Colwyn Bay)
- Creuwriion in Arllechwedd (possibly Cororion, between Bangor and Bethesda)
- Caer Dathyl
- Pennardd in Arfon
- 'yg kedernit Gwynedd' (72; the strongest part of Gwynedd) (between Maenor Bennardd and Maenor Coed Alun)
- Nant Call
- Dol Benmaen
- Y Traeth Mawr (the estuary of the Glaslyn and Dwyrdd rivers at Porthmadog)
- Y Felenrhyd (a few miles further east, to the south of the Dwyrdd)
- Maentwrog, just above Y Felenrhyd (where Pryderi is killed and buried)

Appendix 6: The Hunting of Twrch Trwyth

- Esgair Oerfel (Ireland)
- Arthur lands in Porth Clais, Dyfed, and travels to Mynyw (St David's)
- Daugleddyf
- Preseli
- Glyn Nyfer
- Cwm Cerwyn
- Peuliniog
- Aber Tywi
- Glyn Ystun
- The piglets travel to Dyffryn Llychwr, where Twrch comes to defend them.
- Mynydd Amanw, where three piglets are killed (Twrch Llawin, Gwys, and one unnamed)
- Dyffryn Amanw, where two piglets are killed (Banw and Benwig)
- Lluch Ewin
- Lluch Tawy
- The piglet Grugyn Gwrych Erint becomes separated and heads to Din Tywi, then Ceredigion, then Garth Grugyn, where he is finally killed.
- The piglet Llwydog travels to Ystrad Yw, where he too is killed
- Twrch travels to Tawy
- Ewias
- Hafren (Severn bore), where Twrch is ambushed and Arthur's men take Twrch's razor and shears
- Cornwall, where Arthur's men take Twrch's comb and drive him into the sea

Appendix 7: The Locations of Arthur's Court

| | Author | Text | Approx. Dating | Courts |
|---------|----------------------|--|--|--|
| Latin | Geoffrey of Monmouth | <i>Historia Regum Britanniae</i> | c. 1136–38 | Kaerusk / Vrbs Legionum |
| French | Chrétien de Troyes | <i>Erec et Enide</i> | 1170 | Caradigant Cardueil Rohais Nantes Tintaguel |
| | Chrétien de Troyes | <i>Yvain</i> | 1178–81 (possibly interleaved composition with the <i>Charrette</i>) | Cardueil Chestre |
| | Chrétien de Troyes | <i>Le Chevalier de la charrette</i> | 1179–81 (possibly interleaved composition with <i>Yvain</i>) | Carlion Camaalot (later MS addition) |
| | Chrétien de Troyes | <i>Le Conte du graal</i> | 1181–90 | Carlion Cardueil |
| | Anon. | <i>Première Continuation de Perceval (Gauvain Continuation)</i> | Short: pre-1200 Long: post-1220 Mixed: post-Long | Carlion Carduil Glomorgan Tintagol |
| | Manessier | <i>Troisième Continuation de Perceval (Manessier Continuation)</i> | Post-1220 | Camaalot Carduel |
| | Marie de France | <i>Yonec</i> | 1160–90 | Karlion |
| | | <i>Milun</i> | 1160–90 | Karliun |
| | | <i>Lanval</i> | 1160–90 | Kardueil |
| | Anon. | <i>Prose Lancelot</i> | early 13th c. | Cardueil Camahalot Carlyon Karaheis Logres (?) Londres |
| | Raoul de Houdenc (?) | <i>La Vengeance Raguidel</i> | 1200–10 | Carlion Rouëlent Carduel Karaheis Logres (?) Londres |
| | Renaut de Bâgé | <i>Le Bel Inconnu</i> | 1191–c. 1325 | Charlion |
| English | Thomas de Cestre | <i>Sir Launfal</i> | late 14th c. | Karlyoun |
| | | <i>Sir Landevale</i> | early 14th c. | Carlile |
| | | <i>The Awntyrs off Arthure</i> | late 14th/early 15th c. | Carlele |
| | | <i>The Weddyng of Syr Gawen and Dame Ragnell</i> | 15th c. | Carlyll |
| | | <i>Ywain and Gawain</i> | early 14th c. | Kerdyf Cester |
| Occitan | Anon. | <i>Jaufre</i> | 1180–1230 | Carduil |

| | | | | | |
|--------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|---|---|
| Dutch | Anon. | <i>Ferguut</i> | | c. 1250 (Flanders) | Caradigaen Cardoel Carlioen |
| | Penninc / Peter Vostaert | <i>Walewein</i> | | mid 13th c. | Carlioen Cardole |
| | Anon. | <i>Die Riddere metter Mouwen</i> | | 1250–1300 (shortened for Lancelot-compilatie, 1320–25) | Kardoel / Kardeloet Karlioen |
| German | Wolfram von Eschenbach | <i>Parzival</i> | | 1200–10 | Karidoel Dianazdrun |
| | Hartmann von Aue | <i>Erec</i> | | c. 1185 | Karadigân Karidôl |
| | Hartmann von Aue | <i>Iwein</i> | | c. 1203 | Karidôl |
| Welsh | Anon. | <i>Owein</i> | | probably 12th c. | Kaer Llion ar Wysc |
| | Anon. | <i>Geraint</i> | | probably 12th c. | Kaer Llion ar Wysc |
| | Anon. | <i>Peredur</i> | | probably 12th c. | Kaer Llion ar Wysc |
| | Anon. | <i>Trioedd Ynys Prydein</i> | | | |
| | | No. | 1 | 13th c. MS | Mynyw (St David's) Kelli Wic Penn Ryoned |
| | | | 51 | MSS 1350 / 1382 | Kaer Llion |
| | | | 85 | 15th c. (poss. earlier version) | Kaerllion ar Wysg / Aberffraw Celli Wig Phenryn Rioned |
| | | | 94 | 15th c. MS | Caer Llion ar Wysg |

Appendix 8: Map of Arthur's Courts



Fig. 6. Map of Arthur's courts. Omitted from this map are *Rohais*, *Camahalot*, and the court of *Logres*, due to a lack of evidence as to their location. *Dinasdaron* is also omitted from this map, again because of a lack of any specific location for the reasons set out in §4. (Image generated using Google Maps)

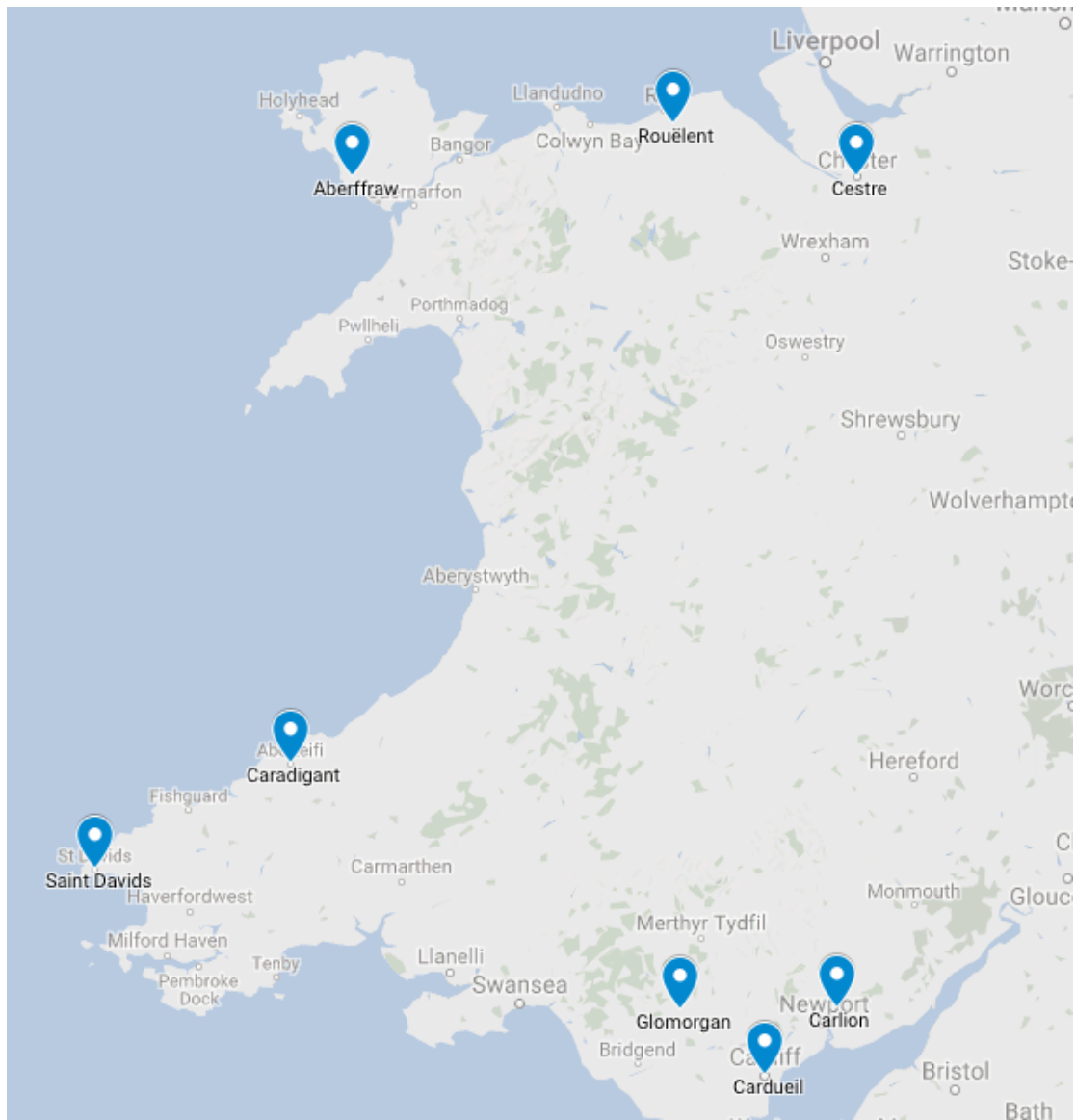


Fig. 7. Close-up map of Arthur's Welsh and Marcher courts. (Image generated using Google Maps)

Appendix 9: Court Breakdown

| | Court Name | Celtic | Welsh Marches |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------|---------------|
| | Aberffraw | ✓ | |
| | Camalot | ? | |
| | Cardigan | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Cardueil: Carlisle | ✓ | |
| | Cardueil: Cardiff | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Carhaix | ✓ | |
| | Carlion | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Celliwig | ✓ | |
| | Chester | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Dinasdaron | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Glomorgan | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Logres | ? | |
| | Londres | | |
| | Mynyw | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Nantes | ✓ | |
| | Penrhyn Rhionydd | ✓ | |
| | Quimper | ✓ | |
| | Rohais | ? | |
| | Rotelan | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Tintagel | ✓ | |
| | | | |
| Total | 20 | 15 | 8 |
| | | 75% | 40% |

Appendix 10: The Guests at Arthur's Plenary Court



Fig. 8. Map of the full list of guests at Arthur's Plenary Court at Caerleon in Geoffrey of Monmouth. (Image generated using Google Maps)



Fig. 9. Close-up map of insular guests at Arthur's Plenary Court at Caerleon in Geoffrey of Monmouth. (Image generated using Google Maps)

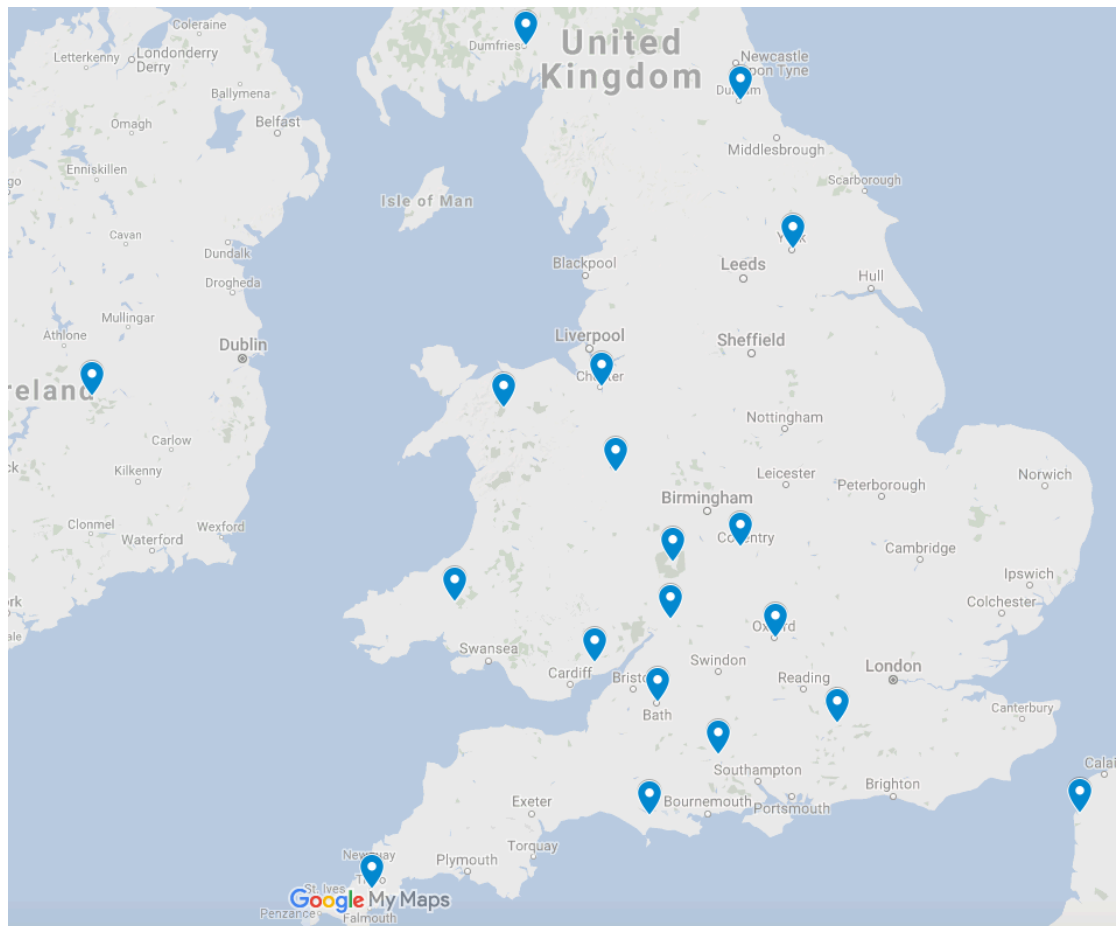


Fig. 10. Close-up map of insular guests at Arthur's court in *Brut y Brenhinedd*. (For perspective, *rwytywn* is omitted). (Image generated using Google Maps)

References

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